Problems of Communism

Book Reviews

Michael J. Sodaro

Harold C. Hinton

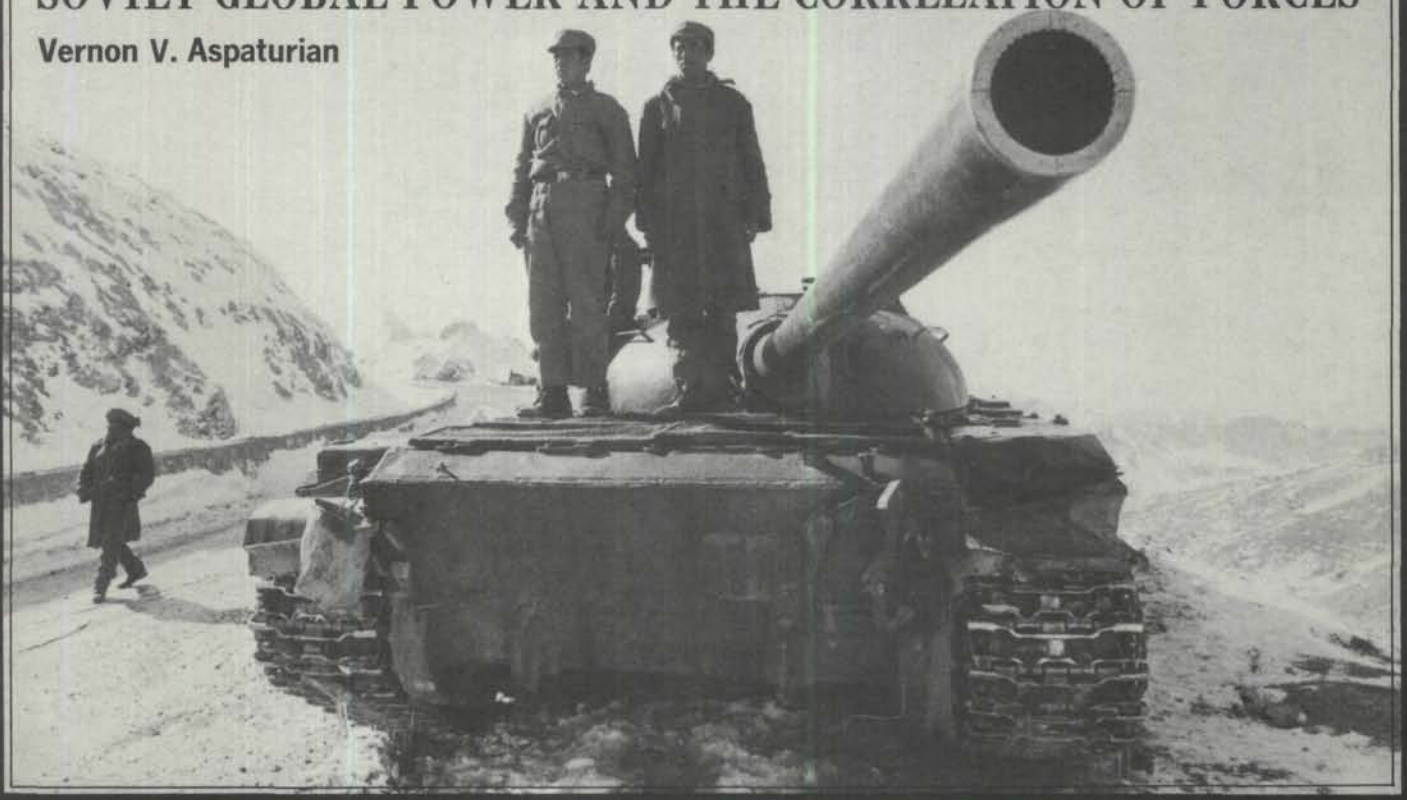
Paul H.B. Godwin

Amos Perlmutter

MAY-JUNE 1980

SOVIET GLOBAL POWER AND THE CORRELATION OF FORCES

Vernon V. Aspaturian



The Politics of Stringency in the USSR — Seweryn Bialer

Political Succession and the Soviet Policy Agenda — George W. Breslauer

Soviet Letters Under Brezhnev — Maurice Friedberg

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Problems of Communism

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MAY–JUNE 1980 VOL XXIX

Problems of Communism is a bimonthly publication providing analyses and significant information about the contemporary affairs of the Soviet Union, China, and comparable states and political movements. Views of contributors, as well as geographic boundaries and names, do not necessarily reflect the policies of the United States Government.

On all editorial matters, communications should be addressed to: The Editors, *Problems of Communism*, International Communication Agency, United States of America, 1776 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC, 20547, USA.
Telephone: (202) 724-9801.

On subscriptions, communications should be addressed to: The Superintendent of Documents, US Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 20402, USA, preferably using the subscription form provided on the inside back cover of this issue. Outside the United States, please address inquiries to the Public Affairs Section, Embassy of the United States of America.

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An annual index for *Problems of Communism* appears in the November-December issue (No. 6) of each year except in the case of the first three volumes, which are covered in a combined index in the November-December issue (No. 6) of Vol. III. Material from the journal is also indexed in *ABC POL SCI, Bibliographie Internationale des Sciences Sociales* (all sections), *Current Contents, Economic Abstracts, Historical Abstracts, Index to US Government Periodicals, International Political Science Abstracts, Public Affairs Information Service, Social Sciences Index, Social Sciences Citation Index, Strategic Studies Reference Guide*, and *United States Political Science Documents*.

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Cover: Afghan soldiers on a Soviet tank on the Gardez road in Afghanistan's Paktia province on January 22, 1980. Photo by Alain Mingam/Gamma via Liaison.

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IN THIS ISSUE OF

Problems of Communism

Articles

Soviet Global Power and the Correlation of Forces
Vernon V. Aspaturian

During recent years, the USSR has pursued a global policy that is something less than a "grand design" but something more than a response to targets of opportunity. As part of this policy, it has demanded treatment as an equal of the United States, but it has recognized that in fact—if not in propaganda claims—it has not yet achieved equality. Moscow now fears that its assertiveness since the mid-1970's, and especially the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, will cause Washington to take advantage of America's superior productive potential to counter the military capabilities that underlie the Soviet claim to equality.

The Politics of Stringency in the USSR
Seweryn Bialer

The complex economic problems that will face the Soviet leadership in the 1980's—a slowdown in growth and shortages of energy and manpower—in combination with a likely political succession will exert unusual pressures for a reform of the Soviet system of economic management. Yet, it is not certain whether the regime will respond with broad change or instead settle for a period of muddling "down" not "through."

Political Succession and the Soviet Policy Agenda
George W. Breslauer

As the Brezhnev succession draws near, the two previous political successions in the USSR assume an immediate relevance. Each was marked by an underlying reformist impulse within the Soviet political elite; each was characterized initially by rival policy programs, policy zigzags, and polarization of positions; and in each the party leader ultimately gained the ascendancy and forged a comprehensive program in domestic and foreign policy. Indications are that the reformist impulse will persist, although several new factors at home and abroad might alter the pattern.

Soviet Letters Under Brezhnev
Maurice Friedberg

Soviet literature under Brezhnev, while not imprisoned in the sort of ideological straitjacket that marked the Stalinist years, has tended to retreat from the political engagement that surfaced briefly during the Khrushchev "thaw" to a greater concern with private issues. In keeping with this trend, there has been increased use of poetry and short prose forms, with a corresponding decline in the publication of novels.

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Essay-reviews

Eurocommunist Views of Soviet History

Michael J. Sodaro

Since the early 1970's, a variety of critical studies of Soviet history by members of the Italian and French Communist parties have appeared. These writings reflect an effort to assert that Eurocommunism is distinctive from the Soviet model in origins and methods. At the same time, they betray the disinclination of the Eurocommunists to break completely with the Soviet heritage.

Perspectives on the Sino-Soviet Conflict

Harold C. Hinton

The Sino-Soviet conflict continues unresolved, and the literature regarding it in both East and West often leaves much to be desired. Western studies tend to treat the subject from narrow, specialized perspectives; in the Soviet Union, published works fail to reflect the objective studies that Soviet scholars are capable of producing.

The Party and the Gun in China

Paul H.B. Godwin

Long-standing Western concepts of the political role of the Chinese military were significantly altered by the events of the Cultural Revolution and the Lin Biao affair of 1971, which showed the weakness of the party's control apparatus within the military and the porousness of the boundary between the civil and military hierarchies. This relationship remains largely unchanged today, and the Chinese military will likely continue to play a major political role, especially in times of severe intraparty factional dispute.

Nasser's Legacy

Amos Perlmutter

Gamal Abdel Nasser's efforts to carry out agrarian reform, to nurture Egypt's industrialization, and to free Egypt from great power machinations earned him the status of one of the most exalted leaders of the Third World during his lifetime, but retrospective judgments of his record now tend to find it an unimpressive one. His internal accomplishments were meager, for he hooked his economy to Soviet bureaucratic socialism and recreated a bureaucratic feudalism. In foreign affairs, he wound up beholden to Moscow, which did not reward his loyalty.

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Soviet Global Power and the Correlation of Forces

By Vernon V. Aspaturian

For some time now, the USSR's behavior in the international arena, and particularly in the Third World, has been debated within the context of whether Moscow is executing a "grand design" or "global strategy" or merely responding to "targets of opportunity." Actually, Soviet policy amounts to something less than a master plan (grand design) or a five- or ten-year plan (global strategy), yet it is something much more than a sequence of responses to targets of opportunity. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan at the end of 1979 was clearly in part an initiatory act and not exclusively a reactive one. Even more important, the USSR's recent insistence, in advance of any definition or occasion, that as an equal to the United States it must be consulted in principle on all major issues everywhere, hardly seems like a passive, reactive policy that a targets-of-opportunity hypothesis would convey. The Soviet Union responds to targets of opportunity, it often creates its own opportunities, and it behaves in the absence of opportunities.

In short, the Soviet Union has developed a *global policy* to correspond with its as yet modest global capabilities. This article will explore that policy and its complexities and ramifications from Moscow's standpoint.

Assertion of Global-Power Status

"Today," declared Foreign Minister Andrey Gromyko at the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in April 1971, "there is no question of any significance which can be decided without the Soviet Union or in opposition to it."[1] This public, if somewhat premature, self-anointment by Moscow as a global power represented more pretension and anticipation than reality. Although for most of the postwar era, the international system had functioned along bipolar lines, with two powers dominating the international landscape, the United States at that juncture still constituted the only authentic global power.[2]

To be sure, Nikita Khrushchev had made a bid for global status in the late 1950's and early 1960's, when he thought that Soviet space achievements had set in motion a psychological momentum that could be converted into Soviet power. But this early and highly premature bid had failed, just as had Khrushchev's boast that the Soviet Union would soon overtake the

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[1] *Pravda* (Moscow), Apr. 4, 1971.

[2] Both the USSR and the United States, it is true, had by 1960 achieved recognition as "superpowers." As such, they shared a number of salient common characteristics which set them apart from the other states in the international community. Each had a large, diversified, and highly skilled population; boasted a powerful industrial-technological capacity; occupied a large, strategically located territory; was the leader of an ideological-military alliance; and gathered around itself a retinue of client states from various parts of the world. Most important, each had or was soon to develop a capability sufficient to unilaterally and almost instantaneously incinerate the globe. Perhaps it is this last characteristic, gruesome as it may be, that constitutes the ineffaceable stigmata of a global power—more, perhaps, by adumbration than designation, since the crude capacity to destroy the entire planet does not by itself enable a country to function as a global power.

Although the distinction between the concepts "superpower" and "global power" has not always been recognized and the two concepts have often been used interchangeably, the difference is fundamental, if subtle. The term "superpower" has primary reference to the magnitude of power which a state possesses. While the unilateral capacity to

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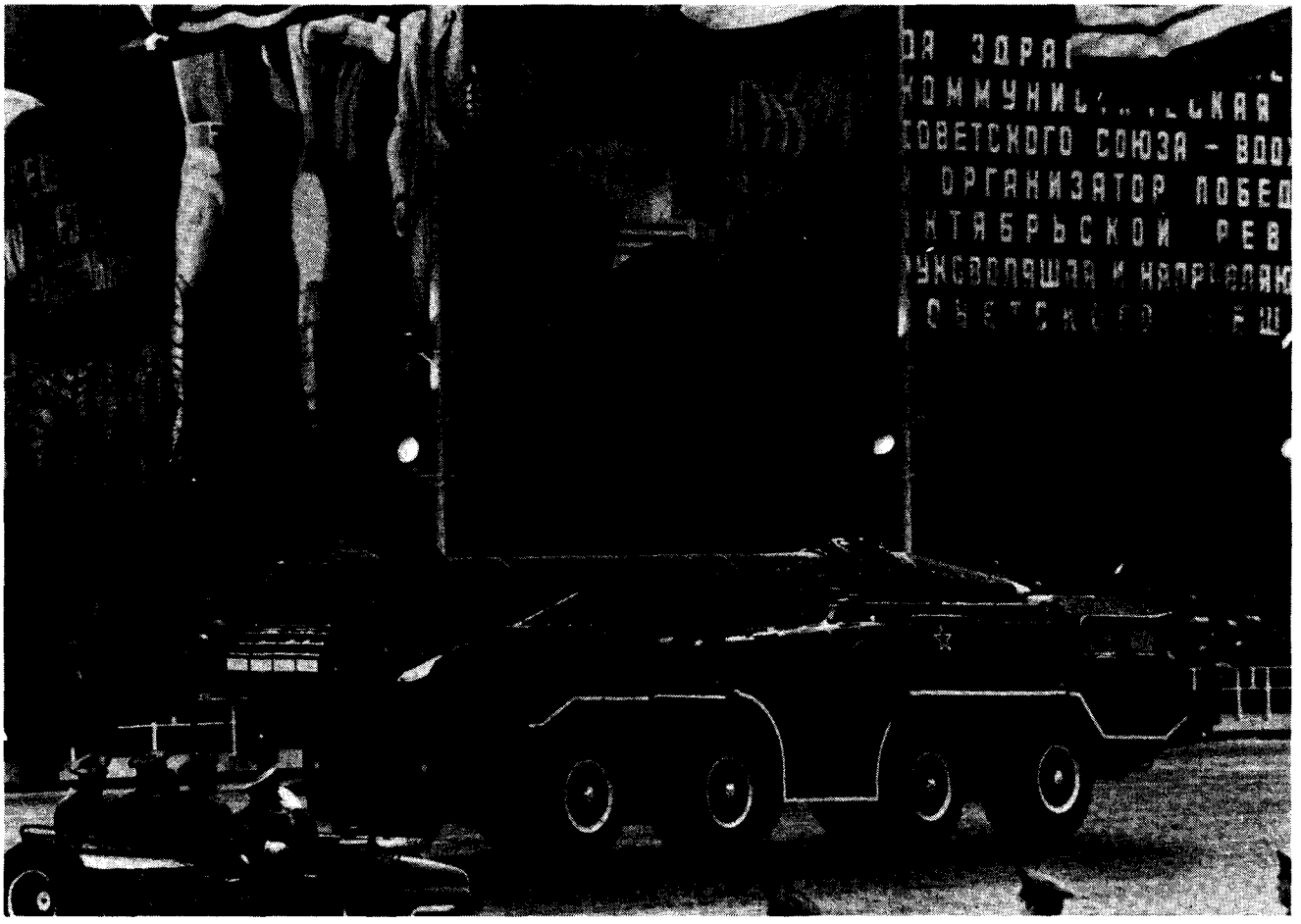

Soviet missilery on display in Red Square during the Revolution Day parade on November 7, 1979.

—Alain Nogues/SYGMA.

United States in science, technology, and certain sectors of the economy.[3]

Within a year after Gromyko revealed Moscow's self-image as a global power, however, the Soviet Union was formally, if inadvertently, enshrined as a global power when, at the SALT I ceremonies in Moscow, the United States voluntarily recognized the Soviet Union as an equal *strategic power,* as reflected in the principle of strategic parity. One prerequisite "for maintaining and strengthening peaceful relations" between the USSR and the United States, reads the "Basic Principles of Relations between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," is "the recognition of the security interests of the Parties based on the principle of equality."[4] Although the Soviet Union in 1972 was not yet a global power, Moscow considered that the SALT I agreements and the principle of strategic parity invested the USSR with the mantle of global status and all of the entitlements and deference such a status presumed and implied.

destroy the entire planet constitutes an indispensable prerequisite for global power status, however, it is by no means sufficient for a state to qualify as a global power, for the concept of a "global power" involves not only the magnitude of power that a state possesses but also the range and reach of that power. Thus, countries such as China, France, West Germany, and Japan have superpower potential because of their material and human resources, but it is doubtful that any country aside from the US and the USSR, with the possible exception of China, can assemble the complicated and intricate complex of intersecting and reinforcing economic, scientific, technological, military, demographic, and geographical capabilities necessary to function as a global power.

[3] See Khrushchev's report to the Extraordinary 21st Congress of the CPSU in *Pravda,* Jan. 28, 1959.

[4] The full text of this document, signed on May 29, 1972, appears in *The Department of State Bulletin* (Washington, DC), June 26, 1972, pp. 898–99. It is not entirely clear that President Richard M. Nixon and his national security adviser, Henry Kissinger, anticipated, much less intended, that the principle of strategic parity and equal security should or would invest the Soviet Union with global power status. Certainly, the United States strongly contested such an interpretation once the USSR began to behave like a global power.

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About 1974, the Soviet Union's global character finally took shape, when the USSR developed a modest but growing global capability to match its global pretensions. Taking advantage of the temporary paralysis induced in the United States by the post-Vietnam malaise and Watergate, the USSR cautiously embarked upon its first global excursion by orchestrating from Moscow an ingeniously conceived and effective military intervention by its Caribbean client state, Cuba, in the remote reaches of Southern Africa. The fact that Moscow could logistically conceive and execute such a military operation was a tangible confirmation of its global reach. To be sure, the USSR still does not possess the resources and capabilities to intervene in all parts of the globe with equal effectiveness, and its capabilities fall short of America's global capabilities. But it does possess sufficient reach to carefully select its targets around the globe, depending upon opportunities, risks, and chances of success.

As befits a global power, the Soviet Union included in the new constitution adopted on October 7, 1977, an entire chapter on foreign policy which elaborated the foreign policy aims and functions of the Soviet state in comprehensive global terms. Article 28 reads:

The foreign policy of the USSR is aimed at ensuring international conditions favorable for building communism in the USSR, safeguarding the state interests of the Soviet Union, consolidating the positions of world socialism, supporting the struggle of peoples for national liberation and social progress, preventing wars of aggression, achieving universal and complete disarmament, and consistently implementing the principle of the peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems.[5]

After the USSR had functioned as a global power for about five years, the Soviet leadership apparently calculated that the combination of the United States' acceptance of the USSR as a military equal—indeed, the general perception that the Soviet Union might even be militarily superior—and the USSR's new global capabilities entitled it to be recognized as an overall equal to the United States. In fact, it often acted as if it were ready to supersede the United States as the paramount power in the interstate system, with its behavior assuming increasingly interventionist and expansionist dimensions. Such behavior culminated in the massive invasion of Afghanistan at the end of 1979.

US President Richard M. Nixon and General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Leonid I. Brezhnev after the signing of SALT I in Moscow on May 29, 1972.

—Liaison.

[5] A full text of the new Soviet constitution can be found in *Konstitutsiya (Osnovnoy Zakon) Soyuza Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik* (Constitution [Basic Law] of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Moscow, 1978. Article 28 is on p. 21.

In contrast to the 1977 document, the 1936 constitution contained no special section on foreign policy, and it did not even include any extravagant statements on the aims of Soviet foreign policy. The sweeping ideological tone of the foreign policy section of the 1977 constitution harkens back to the 1924 constitution. The latter's Preamble began with a grandiose description of a "world . . . divided into two camps . . .the camp of capitalism: national hate and inequality, colonial slavery and chauvinism, national oppression and massacres, brutalities and imperialist wars . . . [and] the camp of socialism: reciprocal confidence and peace, national liberty and equality, the peaceful coexistence and fraternal collaboration of peoples." Its final words were that "the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics . . . will serve as a bulwark against world capitalism and mark a new decisive step toward the union of the workers of all countries in one World Socialist Soviet Republic." *Istoriya Sovetskoy Konstitutsii, 1917–1956* (History of the Soviet Constitution, 1917–1956), Moscow, 1957, pp. 458–60.

Whereas the words of the 1924 constitution reflect revolutionary bravado, ideological candor, and naiveté, the passages in the 1977 constitution reflect the power and self-confidence of Leonid Brezhnev's Russia. The absence of sweeping ideological verbiage concerning foreign policy in the 1936 constitution mirrored Moscow's prudence when it was developing the capabilities enabling it subsequently to openly reassert its ideological foreign policy goals in a constitutional document.

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Although Soviet leaders and Soviet writers often suggest that the USSR is entitled to both global *status* and *equality* with the United States as some sort of divine right ordained by history, they clearly realize that the situation is more complicated than they imply. From an objective analytic standpoint, no state, not even the United States, is *entitled* to be a global power. The position of the United States in the international system was not granted to it by divine right, history, or the consent of the international community. It was self-asserted and must be self-sustained. Similarly, the Soviet Union does not possess any "right" to global status; it must be self-achieved, self-asserted, and self-sustained.

In recognition of this reality, Moscow has developed the independent capabilities to function on a global level. Thus, there is little question that the Soviet Union is a global power, whether the United States recognizes it as such or not.

Likewise, no state is *entitled* to be equal with any other state. Just as there are superpowers and superpowers, there may also be distinctions between global powers, even if the exclusive club is restricted to two members. Moreover, equality—unlike global status, which is independently determined—is a relative term and is measured against others. Of perhaps greatest significance, equality, as even Soviet observers implicitly concede, is *ascriptive* in character and depends upon the recognition and policies of others.

Yet when the United States in 1972 accepted the Soviet Union as a strategic equal—that is, as an equal military power—this did not mean that the United States recognized the USSR as an equal *global* power. To the contrary, Washington perceived the SALT I agreements as instruments designed to domesticate and contain Soviet power, not unleash it. Of this fact, Moscow is exceedingly conscious. To American criticisms of Soviet behavior in Africa and the Third World more generally as incompatible with détente, for instance, Moscow has complained defensively that the United States is refusing to treat the USSR as an equal, is attempting to deny its global credentials in practice while recognizing them symbolically.

Thus, as we shall see in detail later, Soviet leaders are painfully aware that the favorable military equation which they have achieved largely by default, because of the continuing state of the internal situation in the United States in the wake of Vietnam and Watergate, is the critical factor in what they perceive as a favorable "correlation of forces" and may prove temporary, should Washington decide upon new objectives and priorities. What they have to calculate is the degree to which they can take advantage of what observers often call a "window of opportunity" during the next few years, without running the risk of prematurely provoking a renewed arms race with the United States, which, in light of the unrealized military potential of the American economy, they would surely lose.

In addition, Soviet leaders recognize the enormous resources of Washington's allies, most of whose productive energies and outputs have been devoted to the civilian sector of the economy. And, finally, there is China and the notorious "China card," which the United States could seriously exploit as part of its global policies. For example, the Soviet achievement of equality by ascription has posed the question of why only the USSR is entitled to equality with the United States. Moscow itself never raises this issue, and when others raise it, Soviet spokesmen are very evasive. Thus, at a press conference in Bonn on November 23, 1979, Foreign Minister Gromyko responded to a query about equality for other powers within the context of a possible SALT III negotiation in the following fashion:

But one asks . . . After all, other countries also have strategic arms. What types of weapons and what countries should have equality? Why should the Soviet Union always proceed from the premise that the subject under discussion should be equality only between the US and the Soviet Union? . . . None of these matters have been settled.[6]

It is this enormous material and human potential, whose military convertibility has only barely been tapped—while the USSR has strained and stretched its resources to maintain the current balance—that the Soviet leadership must worry about as it contemplates its future actions. But potential is potential, and possibilities are only possibilities. Hence, Soviet leaders must also crank into their calculations the intangible factors of leadership, public support, internal stability, and various other factors operating in these countries and arrive at a judgment as to whether the undoubted potential that the United States could mobilize can indeed be transformed into a "correlation of forces" favorable to Washington.[7]

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[6] *Pravda*, Nov. 25, 1979.

[7] That the unrealized military potential of the United States and its allies might become a force for the disruption of the evolving "correlation of forces" that Moscow has deemed favorable to it, is cause for grave concern in the Soviet Union. Even theory is distorted to discount the possibility. One Soviet writer, for example, maintains that "the military potential of the Western powers can no longer serve as the main criterion of their role in the world arena" and goes on to elaborate: "Marxist-Leninist theory proceeds from the fact that the (continued on p. 5)

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Soviet Apprehensions

Obviously, the Soviet Union cherishes its equality with the United States and is reluctant to share it with third powers—most notably, China. But much of the Soviet literature reflects an apprehensiveness on this matter from two directions. The first is that the United States may seek to bestow equality upon other states, e.g., China. Soviet writers *conspicuously avoid* this theme. The second is that the United States may attempt to withdraw its conferral of equality. Three major themes concerning the legitimacy and durability of Moscow's equal and global status can be discerned in Soviet writings, and while they are inconsistent, these inconsistencies mirror anxiety about the permanence and "objective" quality of the Soviet Union's equal and global status. These three themes can be summarized as follows: (1) The United States, by lecturing the USSR on the unacceptability of its internal and external behavior, is not treating the USSR as an equal. (2) The United States is threatening to seek "military superiority," which is incompatible with the principle of equality. (3) The Soviet Union's equality has been established by the "correlation of forces" and the objective processes of history, and the Soviet Union is fully capable of preventing the United States from attaining military superiority.

US lectures on the acceptability and appropriateness of Soviet internal and external behavior have evoked great Soviet resentment, since they have recently been coupled with threats of rewards and punishment by the United States if Moscow continues to misbehave—hardly the way that one equal would treat another equal. The Carter administration's condemnation of Moscow's violations of "human rights" and restrictions on the emigration of Soviet citizens and contraventions of Basket III of the Helsinki agreement have been viewed as particularly arrogant attempts by the United States to sermonize and impose its own values and norms upon the Soviet Union. These acts, according to Moscow, are incompatible with the elementary norms of international law and sovereignty and would represent bad form even when directed against smaller and vulnerable powers, to say nothing of the fact that they are directed against a power equal to the United States. Thus, on March 21, 1977, no less a personage than Leonid Brezhnev charged:

Washington's assertions that it is entitled to teach others how to live cannot, I believe, be accepted by any sovereign state. . . . Let me repeat: we shall not tolerate interference in our internal affairs by anyone, under any pretext. The normal development of relations on such a basis is, of course, unthinkable.[8]

Moreover, when President Carter, after the invasion of Afghanistan, shifted from lecturing Moscow on proper behavior to "punishing" the Soviet Union for improper deportment and further threatening to withdraw "rewards," Brezhnev's response, while clearly a rebuff, nevertheless betrayed an apprehension that the United States was indeed still capable of "punishing" and "rewarding" its putative equal:

. . . the sum total of steps taken by the American administration in connection with the events in Afghanistan—the freezing of the Salt II treaty, the refusal to deliver to the USSR a whole series of commodities, the suspension of talks with the Soviet Union on a number of questions . . . indicates that Washington is again, as it did decades ago, attempting to talk to us in the language of the cold war . . . . Of course, we will get along without these ties with the United States—in fact, we never begged for them, believing that they were mutually advantageous . . . . However, Washington's arbitrary arrogation to itself of some kind of "right" to "reward" or "punish" independent sovereign states poses a question of principle. In fact, these actions of the US government strike a major blow at the system of relations among states regulated by international law.[9]

Although from Moscow's standpoint US lecturing and sermonizing are insulting and humiliating to the Soviet Union and debase the image of equality it seeks with the United States, they are not by themselves threatening. But Soviet spokesmen also contend that the United States is threatening to attain military and strategic superiority once again. Such an undertaking would not only automatically strip the Soviet Union of its equal status but require a large-scale, fundamental, and even destabilizing reexamination and restructuring of Soviet internal and external policies and a

category of correlation of forces in the world cannot and should not be reduced to the correlation of states' military potentials and that in the ultimate end this correlation is nothing but the correlation of class forces in the worldwide system of international politics." A. Sergiyev, "Leninism as a Factor of International Relations," *International Affairs* (Moscow), May 1975, p. 101. For an excellent assessment of Soviet military potential, see Andrew Marshall, *Sources of Soviet Power: The Military Potential in the 1980's*, Adelphi Papers, No. 152, London, International Institute for Strategic Studies, Summer 1979, pp. 11-18.

[8] *Pravda*, Mar. 22, 1977.
[9] Ibid., Jan. 13, 1980.

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reordering of priorities. It could undermine the credibility of the economic and military commitments of the USSR to its allies and client states, especially those remote from the Soviet Union, And finally, should the United States attain military superiority at a time when the Soviet Union is confronted with a leadership succession crisis, the Soviet regime could be seriously crippled.

Growing out of this second theme have been uncharacteristically modest disclaimers that the USSR has either attained or is striving for military superiority. These appear to be essentially a prudent gesture designed to undercut those in the United States who charge that the Soviet Union either has or soon will attain military superiority.

No less authoritative a figure than Leonid Brezhnev was the first to enunciate such a disclaimer. In a speech at the Soviet city of Tula in January 1977, he asserted:

Of course, comrades, we are improving our defenses. It cannot be otherwise. We have never neglected the security of our country and the security of our allies, and we shall never neglect it. But the allegations that the Soviet Union is going beyond what is sufficient for defense, that it is striving for superiority in armaments in the aim of delivering a "first strike," are absurd and utterly unfounded.[10]

To further indicate to Washington and the West that the disavowal of military superiority was more than a unilateral assurance, and simultaneously to ensure that the United States would be bound by formal commitments not to seek military superiority, the USSR entered into a joint renunciation of the intention to seek military superiority, in the Joint Soviet-American Communiqué executed in Vienna in June 1979 as part of the SALT II arrangements. This read:

Each [side] stated that it is not striving and will not strive for military superiority, since that can only result in dangerous instability, generating higher levels of armaments with no benefit to the security of either side.[11]

In Berlin in October 1979, Brezhnev reiterated his disavowal of any inclination to seek military superiority, in even stronger words than he had used in 1977:

As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, I repeat again and again: We do not seek military superiority. We have never intended and do not now intend to threaten any state or group of states. Our strategic doctrine is a purely defensive one. Allegations that the Soviet Union is building up its military might on the European continent on a scale not called for by its defense requirements have nothing to do with reality. This is a deliberate deception of the public at large.[12]

But this time he coupled it with a charge that the United States was seeking to regain military superiority:

[10] Ibid., Jan. 19, 1977.

[11] See *The Department of State Bulletin*, July 1979, p. 55.

[12] *Pravda*, Oct. 7, 1979. In order to give this theme greater force, Defense Minister Dmitriy Ustinov shortly afterward, in an article entitled "Military Détente Is a Command of the Times," cited this passage as evidence that the Soviets did not have and were not seeking military superiority. Ibid., Oct. 25, 1979.

Leonid I. Brezhnev, left, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the USSR Supreme Soviet's Presidium, with US President Jimmy Carter at Vienna on June 18, 1979.

—Henri Bureau/SYGMA.

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The dangerous plan for the deployment of new American nuclear missiles on the territory of Western Europe . . . would substantially change the strategic situation on the continent. Their objective is to upset the existing balance of forces in Europe and to try to ensure military superiority for the NATO bloc.[13]

Both the change and the disclaimer obviously were aimed at deterring the United States from what he feared it was capable of doing.

The recurring anxiety that the United States might once again make a bid for military superiority and succeed became even more pronounced after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. It appeared to some Soviet commentators that although Soviet leaders had indeed correctly calculated that the risk of American military counteraction in response to such an invasion would be low, they may nevertheless have overplayed their hand to gain a local, if admittedly important, advantage. That is, they had miscalculated the impact the invasion would have upon the fears and attitudes of the US public, particularly during a presidential election in which the principal Republican contender was an undoubted advocate of regaining American military superiority.

Despite the enigma and paradox that the Carter administration constituted for the Kremlin leaders, and despite its annoying messianic sermonizing about human rights, the administration had exhibited a deep aversion to the use of force or had been easily deterred from employing it because of its perception of Soviet power and Moscow's willingness to use it. As Moscow saw things, the Carter administration had refused to react to the continuing Soviet/Cuban intervention in Angola; shunned an opportunity to confront Moscow and Havana on the Horn of Africa by supporting Somalia; huffed, puffed, and retreated on the issue of the Soviet combat brigade in Cuba; and allowed itself to be paralyzed by the seizure of the American embassy in Teheran.[14] Furthermore, in the Soviet view, this administration had shown itself to be particularly susceptible to Soviet pressures and persuasion. In the face of Soviet complaints and mild threats, Jimmy Carter had canceled the B-1 bomber, vetoed construction of another attack carrier, decided not to build the neutron bomb (after pressuring European leaders to publicly accept it even at some cost in terms of their internal political support), and retreated on a whole host of issues connected with the SALT II agreements, including matters connected with the cruise missile, the Backfire bomber, ICBM ceilings, and verification capabilities.

But now, the assessment went, the Kremlin by its move into Afghanistan may have created a real possibility that the "hard-liners" in the American ruling class would succeed in replacing the Carter administration and launch the United States on a course to achieve military supremacy. Some Soviet leaders, as the Soviet literature indicated, were already convinced that the "hard-liners," in the person of the President's national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, had already taken over from the "moderates," as represented by Paul Warnke, former Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and Cyrus Vance, (soon to be former) Secretary of State, and that this shift had clearly been in process before the invasion of Afghanistan. Yet, as the initial Soviet comments on presidential candidate Ronald Reagan reveal, the rejoinder to that judgment by some Soviet circles might well be a Russian version of "if you think Brzezinski is a 'hard-liner,' you ain't seen nothin' yet."

The apprehension in much of the Soviet literature and the speeches of Soviet leaders that the United States is still fully capable of reversing the direction in which the "correlation of forces," particularly in the military sphere, had been moving, is quite evident, even though coupled with these fears are the familiar assertions that the existing alignment of power is irreversible and such that US efforts would be futile. Not only do Soviet spokesmen recognize that a renewed US effort to regain strategic superiority would stretch Soviet resources to their limits, but they also acknowledge that in spite of the maximum Soviet effort, American potential remains great enough that the United States could reverse the existing "correlation of forces" simply by enhancing its military power—not to speak of doing other things, to be discussed below.

Thus, the Kremlin's leading Americanologist, Georgiy Arbatov, warned the Soviet leaders obliquely of

[13] Ibid., Oct. 7, 1979. Soviet writers and the Soviet press have devoted an extraordinary amount of space to the theme of the necessity of "military détente," while simultaneously castigating the idea of "ideological détente." The stress on the desirability of military détente betrays the Soviet fear of a resurgence in US military strength. See, for example, the following: A. Voronov, "The Chimera of Military Superiority," *International Affairs*, February 1980, pp. 18–27; A. Svetlov, "The Soviet Union's Struggle for Military Détente," ibid., February 1976, pp. 93–101; D. Proektor, "Military Détente: Primary Task," ibid., June 1976, pp. 35–43; editorial on "European Security and Détente," ibid., February 1980, pp. 3–7; and Y. Zakharov, "International Cooperation and the Battle of Ideas," ibid., January 1976, pp. 85–95.

[14] See Vernon V. Aspaturian, "Moscow's Afghan Gamble," *The New Leader* (New York, NY), Jan. 28, 1980, pp. 7–13, for the author's elaboration of this point. Also see Jiri Valenta, "Afghanistan—The Soviet Invasion," a four-part article in *The Baltimore Sun*, Feb. 19, 20, 21, and 22, 1980; idem, "Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan: The Difficulty of Knowing Where to Stop," *Orbis* (Philadelphia, PA), Summer 1980.

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such a possibility:

Despite a sustained period of détente, the US ruling class has still not completely put behind it its past global pretentions . . . to break with the guidelines, notions, and traditions of a whole period—a period right after World War II, in which America found itself in an exceptional position by virtue of an aggregation of unique and transient historical circumstances (although the Americans, understandably, wanted to see these circumstances as the natural and eternal order of things).

Furthermore, he even singled out closer relations with China as a conceivable means whereby the United States could temporarily remedy the existing unfavorable balance confronting it until it could rectify the situation through its own resources. The Americans, he said, are gripped with "illusions to the effect that a rapprochement with the chauvinistic Chinese leadership . . . can change the balance of forces, strengthen America's position, and enable it to . . . again lord it over the planet to its heart's content." Simultaneously, Arbatov issued a caveat to Washington that the Soviet Union could still muster sufficient resources to maintain parity, at least in the military field: ". . . the Soviet Union today has greater possibilities than ever before to frustrate such plans [the achievement of military superiority] and to maintain parity in the military field."[15]

Widely prevalent in Soviet commentary is the view that the United States is not merely interested in reclaiming military superiority but yearns to restore itself to the apex of the international system as the principal arbiter of the planet's destiny, to renounce its agreement to accept the Soviet Union as an equal partner and behave once again as if it were the world's only authentic global power, with the self-asserted right to set the international agenda, resolve disputes, and in general regulate and manage the international system. These fears masquerading as accusations simultaneously afford retrospective insight into the real image which Moscow had earlier of America's position in the international system and disclose the Soviet nightmare that while the United States may not develop sufficient power to roll back the wheels of history, it may once again be able to seize its helm. In spite of all their bravado about the favorable alterations in the "correlation of forces" during the past decade, Soviet leaders continue to have a deep and even awesome respect for the enormous economic, scientific, and technological resources of the United States and the realizable military potential inherent in them—potential which the favorable shift in the "correlation of forces" has obviously left intact. The anxiety that results is implicitly but clearly spelled out in *Pravda*'s editorial denouncing President Carter's State of the Union message of January 23, 1980:

The message and the speech . . . openly state the US claim to a "leading role" in the world. What "leading role" means is Washington's intention to dictate its system in any region and to any state, and, when the US administration deems it expedient, to use any means, including weapons, to oppose national liberation, revolutionary and all progressive movements. Thus, what we see here is a new American claim to world supremacy.[16]

Accompanying the Soviet accusation and fear that the United States refuses to accept the USSR as an equal and is striving for military superiority is the not wholly confident reiteration that Soviet equality has been determined by recent irreversible changes in the "correlation of forces" and that the Soviet Union is capable of thwarting US ambitions to attain military superiority and regain world supremacy. In a book written before the advent of the Carter administration, two Soviet writers had already heralded a historic shift in the "correlation of forces" in favor of socialism:

In the mid-1960's, far-sighted leaders in the imperialist camp were compelled to recognize that the historical initiative in world affairs was steadily passing into the hands of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. A change in the balance of power was steadily developing . . . . Experience has demonstrated that the process of change in the relationship of forces between the two systems is an objective process which arises out of the advantages of the new social system. This process can rightly be called irreversible because it has been dictated by the objective laws determining the contest between the two systems.[17]

With specific reference to the actions and responses of the Carter administration to the USSR's invasion of Afghanistan, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko warned that a US effort to free itself from parity and seek

[15] "On the Threshold of a New Decade," *Pravda*, Mar. 3, 1980.

[16] *Pravda*, Jan. 29, 1980.

[17] Sh.P. Sanakoyev and N.I. Kapchenko, *Socialism: Foreign Policy in Theory and Practice*, Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1976, pp. 126–63.

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superiority would fail:

The common objective of all these actions is clear: to break the rough parity that now exists between the military power of East and West, of the Soviet Union and the US, and to try to achieve superiority over the socialist commonwealth . . . . We have stated several times—and at the most authoritative level—that we will not allow this. L.I. Brezhnev talked to the American President about this in Vienna.[18]

Unlike the "far-sighted leaders of the mid-1960's," President Carter, according to the *Pravda* commentary on his 1980 State of the Union message, refuses to recognize or accept realities and therefore adjust accordingly:

On the whole, it follows from the President's message that the country's ruling circles, having run up against the realities of today's world and the objective growth of the forces of peace, progress, and socialism, clearly are reluctant to construct their policy in accordance with the United States' actual weight in today's world. Apparently, they cannot rid themselves of imperial, hegemonistic thinking, do not want to reckon with the existing alignment of forces in the international arena.[19]

In sum, then, Soviet writers implicitly recognize that the equality which they so passionately cherish remains essentially an ascriptive one. Although they express confidence that the impersonal but objective forces of history will render it permanent, and thus free Soviet equality from its dependence upon American recognition, they are aware that for the time being, it is not. Moreover, it is clear that a successful US decertification of the Soviet Union as an equal could have a traumatic impact upon the Soviet leadership. In response to the aftermath of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, for example, Leonid Zamyatin moaned:

The difficulties arise . . . from the American leaders' unwillingness or inability to understand that equality in international affairs means just that—equality; that parity in the alignment of international forces means parity; and that equal security means equal security.[20]

Soviet concerns on this matter seem to have had an effect on Soviet discussions of the "correlation of forces." This has been fairly complex. Soviet spokesmen have affirmed that while, as Brezhnev stated to the West Germans in May 1978, "the Soviet Union believes that rough equality and parity are sufficient for defense needs" and does not set itself "the aim of achieving military superiority,"[21] it explicitly welcomes and seeks a favorable shift in the "correlation of forces." These two propositions would, on the face of things, appear to be mutually incompatible. The discrepancy thus requires some extended explanation. In response, Soviet spokesmen have offered a more elaborate exegesis of the concept of the "correlation of forces" and have attempted to distinguish it carefully from the concept of the "balance of power," particularly the *military* balance of power.

Cognitive Deception

Although the resulting Soviet position does not represent outright falsehood, it amounts to a kind of "cognitive deception." Since a critical, if not always decisive, component of the "correlation of forces" is the state of the military balance, the two are obviously interrelated, and whereas it is possible to achieve superiority in the "correlation of forces" without at the same time enjoying military superiority, it is nevertheless true that the military component of the "correlation of forces" is the most precise, measurable, and visible component in the calculation. Furthermore, changes in the military balance affect changes in the overall "correlation of forces" more immediately and reliably than changes in any other component, many of which are intangible and amorphous, thus making their calculation and exact weight elusive and subject to differing intuitive estimates and judgments rather than precise and unambiguous measurement. As even a Soviet commentator has conceded, "the military strength of a state is by all means a decisive element of its position in the world."[22]

To appreciate the character of the new exegesis, it is essential to have a clear understanding of the traditional Soviet approach to the "correlation of forces." Because the Soviet Union has survived and developed its capabilities for decades when it was militarily weak and had to rely upon factors other than the conventional elements of national power to make up for its military deficiencies, the Soviet leadership is experienced and well versed in the manipulation and mobili-

[18] *Pravda*, Feb. 19, 1980.
[19] Ibid., Jan. 29, 1980.
[20] "Restore a Climate of Détente and Trust," *Literaturnaya gazeta* (Moscow), Feb. 27, 1980, p. 14.
[21] *Pravda*, May 4, 1978.
[22] A. Sergiyev, "Leninism on the Correlation of Forces as a Factor of International Relations," *International Affairs*, May 1975, p. 101.

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zation of various "exotic" nonmilitary elements that can be factored into the "correlation of forces." One writer recently capsulized these in the following fashion:

The foreign policy potential of a state depends not only upon its own forces and internal resources but, to a considerable extent, on such external factors as the existence of reliable, socio-political allies among other states, national contingents of congenial classes, mass international movements and other political forces active in the world scene.[23]

As the well-known Soviet Americanologist Genrikh Trofimenko has pointed out, such elements even embrace the internal social and political alignments and forces within the United States:

. . . political reality also includes the domestic political situation in the US itself, where the popular masses are demanding increasingly, decisively, and loudly the renunciation of military adventures abroad and the administration's turning to face the internal socio-economic problems . . . . Moments arise when the split between the sentiments and feelings of broad public circles and official policy proves so deep that a bourgeois government, wishing to remain in power, either has to correct official policy or resign from power . . . . The . . . administration must take into account the opinion of the overwhelming majority of voters who support . . . the reduction of US military commitments abroad.[24]

Soviet leaders, in short, have long recognized that social conflicts, tensions, frustrations, and resentments, particularly between classes, conceal tremendous reserves of pent-up social power, which can be detected by dialectical analysis and then tapped, mobilized, and transmuted into concrete political power subject to the manipulation of Soviet policy. These stored-up social energies of a world in ferment and convulsion are released with tremendous force during periods which Lenin described as "revolutionary situations." In calculating the international "correlation of forces," or "the relation of forces in the world arena," these internal social factors, and the direction of their movement—for or against the status quo—constitute important elements in the power equation.

However, Soviet leaders also know that the most direct and quickest way to affect the "correlation of forces" is to increase one's military strength. After all, Nazi Germany's rise to power in the 1930's eloquently demonstrated how the "correlation of forces" could be radically reversed within a short period of time. Instead of "realistically" adjusting to the "realities" and "correlation of forces" as they existed in 1933, Adolph Hitler set out to willfully and successfully revise both reality and the "correlation of forces." His principal means was to transform Germany's human and material resources into military power.

Similarly, the USSR has actually been devoting an inordinate share of its own resources to military development. But given the imbalance in the productive capabilities of the Soviet Union and the United States, between socialism and capitalism, Moscow has also sought to downgrade the salience and possible decisiveness of the military contribution to the "correlation of forces." It stresses the decisive character of the nonmilitary factors, particularly those intangible and elusive (but nevertheless real) social, revolutionary, and progressive "forces" in the overall equation, which are fortuitously inevitable, irreversible, and favorable to the Soviet side.

Hence, the concept "correlation of forces," while useful as a mode of analysis for Soviet leaders in assessing and building strength, is far less useful and relevant for the US and Western leaders. The West is not as versed as the Soviet side in manipulating or adjusting to the manifold social, political, and revolutionary processes which contribute to the "correlation of forces" equation, and for this reason Western analysis and policymakers are likely to put greater stress upon the "elements of national power" and the "balance of power" in the traditional sense as their basic calculus. Attempts to develop a formula which goes beyond the economic and military factors in the balance equation and incorporates assessments of processes in various parts of the globe, while hypothetically possible for Western decision-makers, usually turn out to be dysfunctional and counterproductive, paradoxically because of both the amorphous character of Western ideologies as a guide to Western policies and the rigidity and inflexibility of whatever ideological baggage is employed.

At any rate, the Soviet concept "correlation of forces" differs fundamentally from the concept "balance of power." While the balance of power can be the product of deliberate policy, the "correlation of forces" represents "balance" determined by social and historical processes in which the policy of states is only a component. As developed by Soviet writers,

[23] Ibid., p. 103.

[24] G. Trofimenko, "Political Realism and the 'Realistic Deterrence' Strategy," *SShA* (Moscow), No. 12, 1971.

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the "correlation of forces" constitutes the basic substructure upon which the interstate system rests. The latter, like any superstructure, is governed by man-made rules and is the product of deliberate policy processes of various states, whereas the "correlation of forces" derives from a myriad of cross-cutting and interacting variables which operate independently of decision-makers and state policies. Thus, the "correlation of forces" can be affected only marginally by state policy, but, in general, state policies are shaped by the changing "correlation of forces." Whatever changes take place in the substructure are inevitably reflected in the superstructure of the interstate system.

Soviet writers have been focusing on the changing "correlation of forces" for decades, but only recently have they been discussing the transformational processes at work in the international system. "The Marxist-Leninist approach to the relationship of forces between classes, groups of states, and individual states," contend two Soviet commentators, "differs fundamentally from the approach to these matters taken by bourgeois politicians and ideologists." For Marxists-Leninists,

International politics is above all an area of struggle and the interaction of diversified class, political, national, and other factors, with class factors always playing the decisive role. These have ultimately shaped the picture of international relations as a whole and in any given period of time.

The changing relationship of forces between the two systems has provided the basis on which new, positive processes in world affairs can now develop. This change means a definite and irresistible tendency towards the increased influence of socialism on the course of world developments. ***It is quite obvious that the alteration in the balance of power between socialism and capitalism is mainly a change in the relationship of class forces.***[25]

On the other hand, "some spokesmen for modern bourgeois political sciences, basing themselves on conceptions first formulated in the last century,"

. . . have made the preservation of peace and all the important processes of international relations contingent on the maintenance of an equilibrium of strength. This equilibrium (or balance of power) is presented as the main and crucial factor in the preservation of peace and the stable development of relations between states and groups of states. From this premise, the maintenance of a definite equilibrium or balance of power between states or groups of states is declared to be the basic factor in the further development of international relations and the key instrument for preserving stability.[26]

Thus, according to this line of analysis, any attempt to function outside the "correlation of forces" ordained by the historical process is bound to fail. Increasingly, the military power of individual states can have only restricted and temporary effects, slowing down the process, speeding it up, or modifying and diverting it in marginal dimensions. Since the changes are in directions unpalatable to the old order, it justifies efforts to arrest or reverse the process by ascribing the movement to the intrigues and machinations of the Soviet Union, as if the processes were the simple product of a contest between states. But while interstate behavior is governed by and dependent upon the underlying "correlation of forces," it does not determine them, and the two spheres are not interchangeable or continuous:

The socialist countries draw a clear line between the spheres of class struggle and interstate relations, and oppose any attempts to erase this line. As for the imperialists, their persistent attempts to interfere in the socialist countries' internal affairs reflect their intention to transfer the class struggle to the sphere of interstate relations, to substitute one for the other.[27]

Consequently, while it is both possible and desirable for countries in their interstate relations to make agreements not to seek military superiority, Soviet observers maintain, "no one can 'put a freeze' on the world socio-political development on the pretext of detente," and "international agreements cannot alter the laws of class struggle."[28] Simply because the Soviet Union and socialism happen to be the principal beneficiaries of these processes, the net consequences of these processes in terms of the "correlation of forces" are incorrectly translated into a Soviet passion for military superiority.

At Vienna in 1979, Brezhnev himself responded to President Carter's complaints about Soviet/Cuban activity in Africa by saying in effect that the President should direct his grievances not at the Kremlin, but to the Muse of History:

[25] Sanakoyev and Kapchenko, op. cit., p. 160. Emphasis added.

[26] Ibid., p. 162.

[27] V. Kortunov, "The Leninist Policy of Peaceful Co-existence and Class Struggle," *International Affairs*, May 1979, p. 91.

[28] Ibid., p. 93.

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Marshal of the Soviet Union Dmitriy F. Ustinov, USSR Minister of National Defense, left, welcomes General of the Army Raúl Castro, Minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba, to Moscow in February 1979.

—TASS from Sovfoto.

The opponents of mutual understanding between the USSR and the US make active use of the legend about a so-called "Soviet military threat." . . . There are also continuing attempts to depict social processes in one country or another and the struggle of peoples for independence and social progress as "Moscow's intrigues and machinations." . . . Our appraisals of political regimes in various countries sometimes differ strongly from the appraisals made by certain circles in the US . . . . We believe that every people has the right to decide its own destiny. ***Why then pin on the Soviet Union the responsibility for the objective course of history and, moreover, use this as a pretext for worsening our relations?***[29]

As noted earlier, there is more than a little disingenuousness in Soviet attempts to draw a sharp distinction between their actions and behavior and what they call the "processes" or "forces" of history. While one can plausibly explain revolutionary movements and social ferment as the product of underlying historical forces and trends, one can hardly burden history with the decision to airlift and support thousands of Cuban soldiers in Angola and Ethiopia, or to send 85,000 Soviet troops into Afghanistan. Even in accordance with Soviet definitions and conceptions, these are the acts and results of deliberate state policy, decisions taken within the context of the interstate system and not in the abstract arena where class struggles occur.

The uncoupling of the concepts "correlation of forces" and "military superiority," in sum, appears to be designed not so much for methodological and cognitive clarity as to send out conflicting signals to two separate audiences. To its partisans and supporters, Moscow is conveying the message that the balance of power has shifted or is about to shift in favor of the Soviet Union; to the West, it is saying that the balance has not and is not about to do so.

Policy Implications

Intellectually dubious though the Soviet distinction between not seeking or striving for military superiority and anticipating a favorable "correlation of forces"

[29] *Pravda*, June 17, 1979. Emphasis added.

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may be, it does have certain implications for Soviet policy. These are fourfold: (1) Soviet leaders will not explicitly claim military superiority or make its attainment a matter of official policy. (2) They will, however, accept military superiority and act upon it if they attain it by default, i.e., if the United States fails to maintain military parity with the Soviet Union. (3) Soviet leaders will accept military parity as sufficient for their defense and security interests, but they will conspicuously avoid saying that they will *strive* for or *seek* parity, i.e., *they will neither strive for nor seek parity or military superiority*. (4) They will, however, strive for and seek a favorable "correlation of forces," since this striving and seeking presumably takes place in the "international arena of class struggles" and not the "international arena of state relations."

These distinctions are important from the USSR's standpoint, for they serve to relocate what Moscow itself mockingly calls the "Soviet threat" or "menace," out of the arena of state relations and into the arena of class struggles. Soviet leaders and writers do not refrain from conceding that "socialism" and the USSR constitute a "menace" or "threat" to capitalism, imperialism, colonialism, reaction, and other assorted evils. Indeed, they exult in the fact, and the new Brezhnev constitution establishes as two of the concrete aims of Soviet policy "consolidating the positions of world socialism [and] supporting the struggle of peoples for national liberation and social progress," which are activities defined even within the Soviet context as belonging to the sphere of "class relations" rather than "state relations."

Yet ever since Leonid Brezhnev resurrected the title of General Secretary of the CPSU, the distinction between "state" and "party" has been losing its relevance insofar as Soviet foreign policy is concerned. For decades, the Soviet leaders found it advantageous and preferable to maintain a scrupulous distance between "party" and "state"—Party Secretary and Premier—in foreign policy, but the practical significance of the distinction diminished under Brezhnev, even before he assumed the post of Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet in 1977. Increasingly after 1966, Brezhnev played a more conspicuous and "official" role in diplomacy and even signed bilateral and multilateral treaties in his capacity as General Secretary of the CPSU, a title which appears boldly on both the SALT I Treaty and the Helsinki Final Act. It is true that he received special plenipotentiary authority to officially represent the Soviet state on these occasions; nevertheless, it was highly unusual for him to attach his party title to formal interstate documents, since the party has absolutely no standing under international law.

Moreover, with Brezhnev's assumption of formal state authority as head of the Soviet state and simultaneous retention of his post as General Secretary of the CPSU, the distinction between the two spheres has been virtually obliterated. Never before in Soviet history have the posts of head of the Soviet state and head of the Soviet party been joined in one person. Neither Vladimir Lenin nor Iosif Stalin nor Nikita Khrushchev was ever head of state; they all were head of government, a lesser position under international law.

Thus, the notion that Leonid Brezhnev, in his capacity as General Secretary, is free to threaten and menace capitalism but nevertheless constitutes no threat to states or countries, simply boggles the imagination. In a curious appropriation and imitation of devices employed in the past by those who tried disingenuously to draw a distinction between the Comintern or international communism on the one hand and the USSR on the other—which Moscow never accepted—the Soviet Union expects the world to believe that its hostility toward capitalism and imperialism as abstractions should bear no relevance to Soviet relations with "capitalist" or "imperialist" states. But now that the Soviet state freely crosses over into the sphere of class struggles, where it can openly threaten and menace capitalism and imperialism and support revolutionary and national liberation movements, one can hardly accept that when it returns to the sphere of interstate relations, its menacing and threatening baggage has somehow been conveniently left behind. There is little question that the baggage is inseparably tied to the Soviet state, no matter within what sphere it chooses to operate.

Even Soviet writers seem to be having an increasingly difficult time sustaining the distinction and justifying the Soviet threat in one realm and denying it in another. For example, they assert on the one hand that "the Soviet Union has never pledged itself to work for the maintaining of the status quo in other countries" and then insist on the other that "social changes occurring in the world . . . serve to strengthen the positions of the democratic and socialistic forces . . . . [and] create a much more favorable international setting for each of the three revolutionary streams of our day—world socialism, the international working class movement, and the national liberation movement—to achieve their goals."[30] The difficulty is compounded by the Soviet constitution's stipulation that the foreign policy of the Soviet state is pledged to support two of

[30] Kortunov, loc. cit., p. 94.

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these revolutionary streams—world socialism and the national liberation movement—and the fact that the Soviet head of state in his capacity as General Secretary of the CPSU presides over, if does not direct, the third, i.e., the international working-class movement.

Leadership Divisions

The foregoing analysis is not meant to leave the impression that Soviet leaders and their various support constituencies agree about the best course of action to take at a time when opportunities appear to be running high and risks low. Indeed, there is substantial evidence to suggest that Soviet leaders have been divided—certainly confused—about how to respond and react to what they have described as the capricious, arbitrary, unreliable, and inconsistent behavior of the Carter administration. This evidence indicates uncertainty about whether such behavior represents deep cunning, traditionally associated in the Bolshevik mind with the kulak, or whether it represents naiveté, inexperience, or even ineptitude.[31] Soviet commentaries on the Carter administration have reflected the entire spectrum of perceptions mentioned—individually, selectively grouped, or, in some cases, all together.

In particular, Soviet leaders and observers found bewildering the US President's rhetoric in favor of détente, SALT II, and cooperation with the Soviet Union and his conspicuous aversion to the use of force, on the one hand, and his stern moralizing about the USSR's violations of "human rights" and its inappropriate behavior in Cuba and Africa, on the other, for this combination of positions, all often in the same speech or statement, implicitly carried a message that American attitudes and policies toward the Soviet Union would be conditional on good marks for Soviet deportment and behavior. Thus, *Pravda,* in response to President Carter's speech before the US Naval Academy on June 7, 1978, registered what was by then a typical complaint:

Recent evidence indicates that American policy is undergoing changes. . . . The US government is also undertaking actions whose aim is difficult to understand. . . . Some administration officials . . . have [caused] . . . considerable confusion in the minds of US allies and among their fellow citizens. President J. Carter's recent speech in Annapolis . . . was supposed to dispel this confusion. However, the US President definitely failed to clarify the American policy, particularly policy toward the USSR . . . for the simple reason that the speech was an attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable—to combine reassurances of devotion to the ideas of détente and improved Soviet-American relations with undisguised attacks against the Soviet Union . . . with a prejudiced and distorted description of Soviet reality of the kind that has rarely appeared since the cold war, even in the most malevolent American newspapers.[32]

While Soviet leaders could fall back on the familiar view that the contradictions and resultant confusion almost certainly represented divisions between the moderates and hard-liners in the American ruling class, the inadequacies of this standard litany as an explanation were quite apparent to them. Moreover, the enigmatic image projected by the Carter administration resulted in disorientation and distortion of the general character of the Soviet internal debate, for the various sides in the Soviet leadership found it difficult to bring into focus a clear image of what they were responding to. Under such circumstances, Soviet observers were moved to shift to personality explanations of US behavior. Even Brezhnev himself did so soon after the invasion of Afghanistan:

As a result of the Carter administration's actions, the world is getting an even clearer picture of the United States as an absolutely unreliable partner in interstate ties, as a state whose leadership, prompted by some whim, caprice, or emotional outburst or by considerations of narrowly understood immediate advantage, is capable at any moment of violating its international commitments and nullifying treaties and agreements it has signed; there is no need to explain what a dangerous destabilizing influence this has on the entire international situation—all the more so because the leadership that is behaving this way is that of a major and influential power, from which the people are entitled to expect a carefully considered and responsible policy.[33]

At the same time, it is by no means clear that the Soviet internal debate can be shaped in a preferred direction by external influences—notably, the United States. That external factors have an impact upon the debate cannot be questioned; at issue is what that im-

[31] See Aspaturian, "Moscow's Afghan Gamble," loc. cit., and Alexander Dallin, *The United States in the Soviet Perspective,* Adelphi Papers, No. 151, London, International Institute for Strategic Studies, Summer 1979, pp. 13–21.

[32] *Pravda,* June 17, 1978.

[33] Ibid., Jan. 13, 1980.

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A group of Soviet T-62 tanks stationed on the outskirts of Kabul on January 7, 1980, during the occupation of Afghanistan by Soviet forces.

—Sipa Press via Black Star.

pact is likely to be.

The emergence of a limited semipluralistic decision-making process in the Soviet system, somewhat akin to an idiosyncratic combination of Graham Allison's bureaucratic and organizational process models,[34] has created the impression that such decision-making processes will almost automatically produce moderate decisions and policies. While the current Soviet decision-making process does often result in more hesitation, vacillation, and involuntary self-restraint in the formulation and execution of decisions and can seriously affect their timing, its impact on the substance or quality of the decision is likely to be much less. In fact, what the process means is that Soviet decisions are increasingly uncertain and unpredictable, and frequently even ambiguous, ambivalent, and reversible.

One of the hidden shoals of Brezhnev's generally successful consensus style of conflict resolution and decision-making—which has resulted in policies commanding the widest possible base of support and, hence, has entailed shared responsibility—has been the definition of his policies, and in particular détente, almost entirely in *utilitarian,* rather than in *normative* or *value,* terms. Détente, for example, is never described as a substantive goal or an objective value in itself; instead, it is discussed in terms of whether it promotes or hinders the achievement of traditional Soviet ideological and other objectives. And it is often referred to as the *best* means or vehicle for achieving substantive ends. Presumably, such references can only mean that if détente hinders the attainment of Soviet goals or can be shown to be less effective than another policy, then détente is likely to be replaced.

The utilitarian and pragmatic dimension to Soviet policies, thus, can lead to the replacement of a policy, no matter how valuable for its own sake or for various vested interests, with one that is more utilitarian and successful in achieving substantive Soviet goals. Precisely such a situation appears to have arisen in the case of the Soviet decision to invade Afghanistan. The self-restraint imposed by détente was increasingly perceived as functionally deleterious to Soviet policy as opportunities increased and risks decreased, and a better utilitarian argument could be made in favor of an invasion than against it, although such a decision would run the risk of rupturing détente. Furthermore, as the course of events in Afghanistan became ominous from the Soviet standpoint, the utility of a policy of not heightening international tensions—i.e., détente—correspondingly diminished. Even though individuals and groups within the Soviet Union may, in varying degrees of intensity, take positions for or against détente because of vested interests of different kinds, they must still debate the policy within the

[34] See his *Essence of Decision,* Boston, MA, Little, Brown and Co., 1971.

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context of the utility of détente for the achievement of the Soviet equivalent of national goals.

Moreover, the appearance of hard- or soft-liners in Washington does not automatically produce counterparts or opposites in Moscow. The symbiotic relationship that exists between various kinds of "-liners" in the two capitals is extremely complicated and depends upon many unknown and unknowable variables. In addition, the state of the military balance—strategic and conventional, global and regional—critically affects the impact that one set of decision-makers and decisions has upon the other set. For instance, the flourishing of moderate forces within the Soviet leadership is not encouraged if the United States allows its end of the strategic balance to tip adversely and refuses to sustain and maintain strategic parity, for excessive weakness and lack of resolve on the US part, whether real or perceived, arouse appetites in the USSR which otherwise can be successfully depicted as unattainable as long as the United States continues to be powerful and its willingness to use that power remains credible. Although power corrupts (mainly the holder) and maims (both the holder and the adversary), impotence excites and invites those whom power corrupts. Thus, moderation is more likely to prevail in the Soviet Union if the United States is strong but not threatening, is prudent and generous from "positions of strength."

One important caveat ought to be registered here, however. While it is true that the Soviet internal debate has an indirect and opaque quality for external audiences, the same is probably the case for internal audiences. Soviet advocates of détente or a relaxation of international tensions, whether as a value in its own right or as a means of serving the interests of particular individuals and groups, must still make their arguments and justifications in utilitarian terms. Therefore, it is essential not to take the often extravagant Soviet claims about how successful détente will be in altering the "correlation of forces" or promoting socialism, revolution, and national liberation, as evidence that détente must be a bad policy for the West since it is simultaneously expected to perform miracles for Moscow. Such Soviet claims may simply be attempts to win arguments against internal opponents of détente.

Conclusions and Prospects

As noted at the outset, one does not have to assume that Soviet intervention abroad in the 1970's reflects a Soviet grand design or global strategy to recognize that the Soviet Union has developed a global policy, representing an intersection of Soviet global capabilities and residual universalist ideological goals. The Soviet move in Afghanistan must be linked with earlier and continuing Soviet/Cuban moves in Africa. As Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter's national security adviser, has pointed out, there is indeed an "arc of crisis" stretching along the western edge of the Indian Ocean from Mozambique to Pakistan.

To be sure, Soviet initiative in virtually all parts of the arc has been distinguished by its absence. The apparent unwillingness of the United States to support its local clients probably had more to do with the development of the crises there than did the Kremlin's political/diplomatic engineerings. Of equal importance, the revolutions in Mozambique, Ethiopia, South Yemen, and Afghanistan were the result of indigenous activity to which the Soviet Union responded, usually following an invitation either from a new regime or one of the factions in an internal civil struggle. And although the USSR did attempt to inflame passions in the final stages of the upheaval in Iran, there is no evidence that Moscow fomented the revolution or had much impact on its ultimate course.

Nevertheless, the overall consequences of Soviet behavior within a global context may eventually be indistinguishable from the execution of a grand design. What is more, the opportunities that have inadvertently and fortuitously been created may induce the Soviet Union to operate as if it is pursuing a grand design or stimulate it to formulate one to take systematic advantage of the situation. In this context, the threat and danger of Soviet envelopment of the Middle East and Persian Gulf region from the south are real. Since the Middle East is adjacent to Soviet borders, the natural resources of the region are close to the centers of Soviet power and lines of communication. Furthermore, no large bodies of water separate the USSR from these natural resources, and the countries lying between the USSR and the resources are small, internally unstable, and subject to both domestic turmoil and external penetration. That Soviet influence and penetration are more likely to result from internal upheavals and invitations for support extended to Moscow rather than from Soviet military initiatives does not significantly reduce the importance of these considerations.

In the recent past, Moscow has placed its ideological goals in cold storage, largely because it deemed too vocal an expression of them counterproductive and because the USSR did not have the capabilities to implement them in any case. But if Soviet global capabilities continue to grow while the capabilities of the United States wane, there could be a resurgence of

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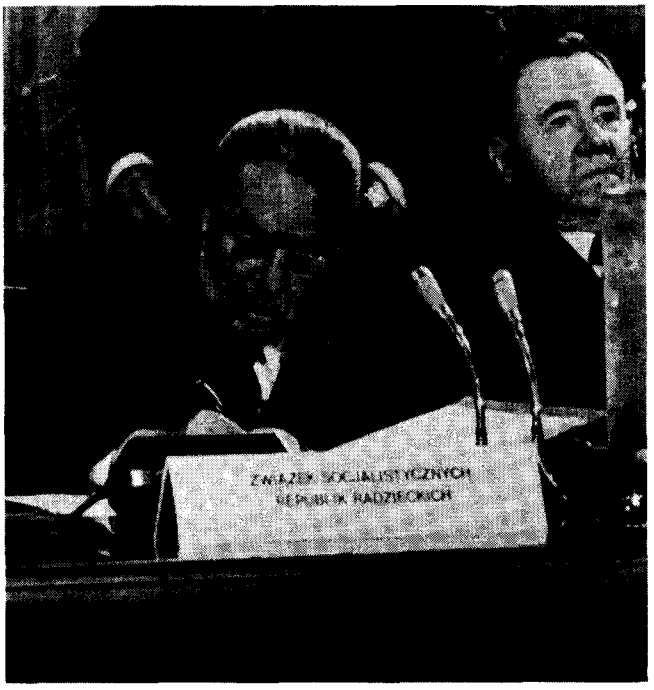

Leonid I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party and Chief of State of the USSR, at the May 1980 meeting in Warsaw of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty Organization on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the pact.

—Liaison.

ideology as a shaper of Soviet foreign policy. The apparent Soviet decision to give global and universalist application to the so-called Brezhnev doctrine affords an ominous reminder of this possibility.

Since the enunciation of this doctrine in the late 1960's, the Soviet interpretation of it and its application had remained something of a mystery. While it surely applied to the Warsaw Pact states and perhaps the "socialist commonwealth," Moscow never defined the latter unambiguously, thus leaving open to question whether it intended the doctrine to cover China, Yugoslavia, Albania, and other Communist states.[35] However, in a speech in April 1980, the Soviet ambassador to France, S.V. Chervonenko (the same Chervonenko who staged and orchestrated the massive intervention in Czechoslovakia by the Warsaw Pact states in 1968 from his vantage point as Soviet ambassador to Prague), went a long way toward clearing up this matter and explaining the precise mechanics whereby the doctrine is applied. Chervonenko asserted in connection with the Afghanistan invasion that the Soviet Union "would not permit another Chile"—a rather imperious and arrogant pronouncement in itself—and made the extraordinary statement that now any country, in any region, anywhere on the globe, "has the full right to choose its friends and allies, and if it becomes necessary, to repel with them the threat of counter-revolution or a foreign intervention."[36] This expanded Brezhnev doctrine serves not only to justify the invasion of Afghanistan but also retroactively to justify the Cuban/Soviet military interventions in Angola and on the Horn of Africa, and it poses an immediate threat to Iran or any other country where internal chaotic conditions can generate "invitations" to Moscow for support to quell internal counterrevolutions or external intervention. Czechoslovakia 1968 and Afghanistan 1979 provide sufficient cause for concern that Soviet leaders are not overly fastidious in examining their invitations and are fully capable of inviting themselves, should no invitation be forthcoming.

To give a further global dimension to his remarks, Ambassador Chervonenko gratuitously warned that the Soviet Union would not recognize any assertion by the United States that the Persian Gulf or any other region was a special area of vital interest to the United States. Indeed, he indicated that the USSR would contest any such claim. In this connection, the Soviet ambassador emphasized the USSR's claim to equality with the United States not only as a military power but also as a global power, and he contended that the Soviet Union had a right equal to that of the United States to be consulted and involved everywhere in the world on all major issues. This contention contained an implicit threat of intervention to sustain such a right.

Even without such an ideological resurgence, however, there appears to be a Soviet global policy—if not yet a grand design woven out of targets of opportunity—that only transparently conceals a powerful Soviet ambition to supplant the United States as the paramount international power—to become the world's principal manager and regulator. The kind of management and regulation that the USSR promises to deliver can already be faintly discerned in the Soviet scholarly and journalistic literature. In the mid-1970's, it emerged vaguely in discussions of the role of Leninist ideas and the "correlation of forces" in achieving an extensive restructuring of the international system which would be "designed to completely

[35] For various definitions and views of the "socialist commonwealth" within the Communist world, see Vernon V. Aspaturian, "The Metamorphosis of the Socialist Commonwealth," in H. Horn et al., Eds. *Sozialismus in Theorie und Praxis* (Socialism in Theory and Practice), Berlin, 1978, pp. 249–320.

[36] As quoted in *The New York Times*, Apr. 22, 1980.

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exclude from international relations *imperialist* violence and threats," i.e., a system in which American and Western power is neutralized or nullified. One Soviet author wrote:

The change in the balance of forces of the two social systems constitutes a decisive factor in restructuring the system of international relations, because this balance is a key issue determining its very nature. The weight of the socialist community in the economic, moral, political, and military balance of forces in the world today has been constantly growing, just as, on the whole, the role it plays in world politics has also increased. The foreign policies of socialist countries have become far more effective, and the coordination of their joint action in solving major issues of our day has become more close and purposeful. As soon as the balance of forces in the world began to change in favor of socialism, possibilities for establishing international relations on truly just and democratic principles were extended.[37]

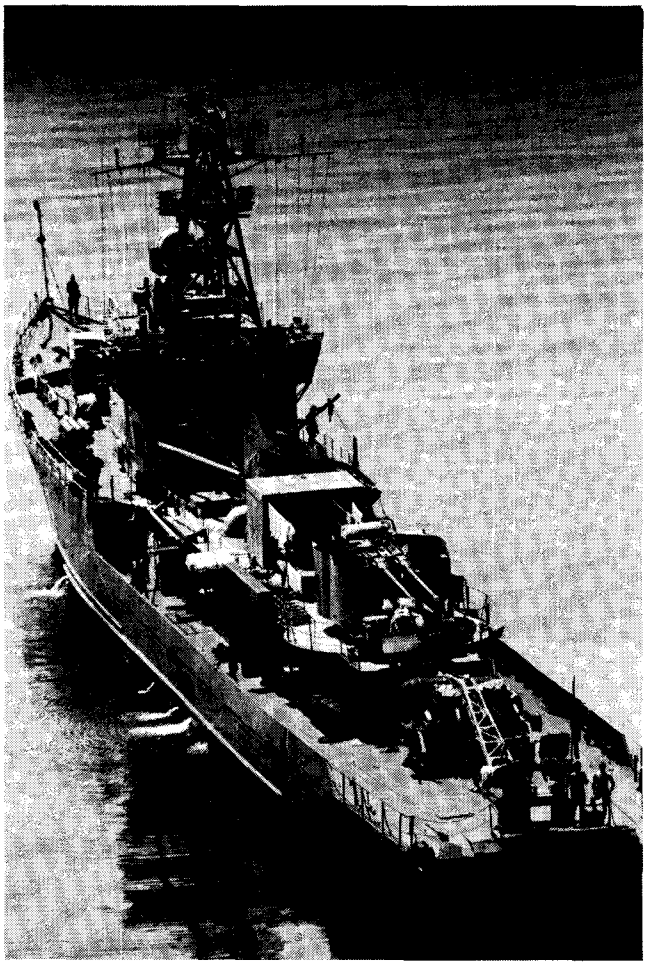
Several years later, the same author offered a much more revealing observation:

The new style international relations that have taken shape and are developing among the socialist countries provide a convincing model of relations among nations and represent a major factor influencing the development of the present-day world.[38]

This notion of an international system restructured in accordance with Leninist norms should not be confused with the crude Soviet ideological approach of earlier years that sought to stimulate world revolution to achieve world communism. Revolution and communism will continue to be supported and promoted, but only in areas where they are supportable and promotable. As the paramount global power, the USSR would make appropriate adjustments to both the developed capitalist world and the underdeveloped Third World—and although the Kremlin would coordinate and manage all three worlds, it would pursue separate policies with respect to each.

When overall Soviet behavior in the international arena is viewed within this context, one can begin to understand why Moscow has been eager to expand and diversify its strategic arsenals far beyond its defense and security needs. One can understand, too, why it pursues a flexible ideological policy—with the Eurocommunists in Western Europe, the do-it-yourself Marxist-Leninists in Africa, the various nationalist and revolutionary movements throughout the Third World, and a motley assembly of traditional and conservative regimes sprinkled around the globe.

Whether or not the USSR will realize its ambition will depend in large measure on how resolutely the challenge of Soviet power is met. The Soviet Union is probably in Afghanistan to stay, but it is by no means inevitable that the Middle East and the Persian Gulf region will pass under Moscow's control and influence.



A Soviet warship in the Strait of Hormuz, connecting the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean, in November 1979.

—SYGMA.

[37] N. Kapchenko, "Socialist Foreign Policy and the Restructuring of International Relations," *International Affairs*, April 1974, p. 5.

[38] N. Kapchenko, "Leninist Foreign Policy: A Transformative Force," *International Affairs*, October 1978, p. 7. See also Philip Windsor, *The Soviet Union in the International System of the 1980's*, Adelphi Papers, No. 152, London, International Institute of Strategic Studies, Summer 1979, pp. 2–10; and Curt Gasteyger, "Soviet Global Strategy," *Survival* (London), July–August 1978, pp. 159–62.

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The Politics of Stringency in the USSR

By Seweryn Bialer

As the Soviet Union enters the 1980's, it faces compelling pressures for change such as it has not experienced in a Brezhnev period generally characterized by stability, continuity, and gradualism. One could mention the coming leadership succession and the possible replacement of the entire core of top leaders, or the potentially explosive nationality problem, which appears insoluble within the present political framework. Yet the Soviet regime has been able to contain similar problems in the past and may well be able to do so for some time to come. In the current decade, however, there looms one set of problems which challenge the Soviet leadership's ability to deal with its various problems in sequential, gradual fashion. This is a complex combination of economic issues which have qualitatively new dimensions and which have important political ramifications.

In brief, the era of extensive Soviet economic development, when high rates of growth were assured through increasing inputs of labor and capital, is ending. An already poor situation is aggravated tremendously by an impending energy crisis and a manpower shortage. As a consequence, the USSR faces a period of decelerating growth or even stagnation, and an environment in which diverse claimants must compete for shrinking marginal increments of resources.

These developments will sharply increase the pressures on the Soviet leadership to change, at the very least, the system of economic planning and management in the USSR. Whether or not they will occasion or combine with crises in other areas—such as leadership politics and nationality relations—and thereby trigger a profoundly destabilizing chain reaction within the political system is more problematic.

Below, we shall outline the dimensions of the economic problems that will face the post-Brezhnev leadership of the Soviet Union. Then we shall summarize the potentially serious political ramifications that these problems will have for the Soviet regime. Finally, we shall explore the question of whether the mounting domestic economic problems will be of sufficient severity to convince the Soviet leadership of the need to abandon its traditional approach of attempting to "muddle through" and to undertake a thoroughgoing reform of the system of economic planning and management.

Signs of a Slowdown

There seems to be considerable agreement among American analysts—government and private—that the Soviet economy will experience a radical deceleration of growth in the 1980's. While there are differences about what the precise degree of the slowdown will be, it is generally believed that the recent decline in the rate of growth will inevitably continue through much of the present decade.[1]

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[1] The following discussion of Soviet economic prospects in the 1980's is based on a number of Western sources, both government and private. Some of the most important government reports are: *DCI [Director of the US Central Intelligence Agency] Testimony Before the Subcommittee on Priorities and Economy in Government of the Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the United States, Ninety-Sixth Congress, 26 June 1979* (hereafter, *DCI Testimony*), mimeographed; US Central Intelligence Agency (hereafter CIA), *Simulations of Soviet Growth Options to 1985*, ER 79-10131, Washington, DC, March 1979; CIA, *SOVSIM: A Model of The Soviet Economy*, ER 79-10001,
(continued on p. 20)

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The most optimistic US government estimates now foresee that Soviet gross national product (GNP) will grow at somewhat less than 3 percent annually over the next few years (down from an earlier estimate of 4 percent), and then continue to decelerate gradually thereafter. Projections for this subsequent slowdown are contingent upon assumptions concerning Soviet oil production. Should oil output decline to 10 million barrels a day by 1985, GNP growth might fall to a 2 percent annual rate; a production rate of 8 million barrels a day could further depress GNP growth to less than 1 percent annually in the mid-1980's.[2]

The Soviet leadership itself has given some signs of awareness of the problem,[3] although we shall not have a clear view of their perceptions in this regard until publication of the 1981–85 Five-Year Plan, probably late this year or early in 1981. Moreover, there are even hints in the current (1976–80) plan of anticipation of a decline in Soviet economic growth. The planned annual rate of growth of capital inputs was set at 6.5 percent, lower than in any other plan since Stalin's death. The planned annual growth of man-hours of labor was put at 1.5 percent (compared with actual growth of 1.8 percent in 1961–70 and 1.9 percent in 1971–75). To be sure, the output targets of the 1976–80 plan implied an annual growth of 1.5 percent in overall factor productivity, but this seems an improbable target judging from the 0.8 percent yearly growth in 1961–70 and the 0.6 percent annual *decline* in 1971–75.[4]

Concrete evidence of a slowdown has already begun to accumulate. Clearly, the 1976–80 plan is in trouble, and far from all the difficulties can be attributed to the weather-plagued results of 1979,[5] which were probably the worst for the Soviet economy in all the years of L.I. Brezhnev's leadership. This dismal performance only served to aggravate and highlight the longer-term problems facing the Soviet regime.

Of special consequence was the drop in grain production, to 179 million metric tons (some 20 percent below the 1978 record of 237.2 million tons and also below the 1976–78 average of 218.9 million tons).[6] Because of this shortfall in domestic production, the Soviet Union had to import large quantities of Western grain and continues to have severe shortages of meat and quality foods.[7]

It is true that Soviet farm production has climbed well above the level of a decade ago, and that 1979 witnessed particularly adverse weather conditions.[8] Nevertheless, fluctuations in agriculture may become more pronounced in the 1980's if weather conditions become more "normal," i.e., harsher than they have been for a number of years. And against a slowing in the overall growth of the economy, year-to-year swings in farm output will have a greater impact on annual economic performance.

The severe winter of 1978–79 conspired to bring economic growth to a virtual standstill. Energy demand increased, even as it became more difficult to produce and distribute energy (more on this below) and other raw materials. On the heels of the poor performance of October–December 1978, industrial production in January–March 1979 increased by less than 1 percent over the comparable 1978 period. Output of steel, cement, nonferrous metals, mineral fertilizer, and pesticides for the first five months of 1979 dropped *below* the figures for the comparable 1978 period. Average daily oil production for the

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Washington, DC, February 1979; CIA, *Soviet Economic Problems and Prospects,* ER 77-10436U, Washington, DC, July 1977; CIA, *Prospects for Soviet Oil Production,* ER 77-10270, Washington, DC, April 1977; CIA, *USSR: Long-Term Outlook for Grain Imports,* ER 79-10057, Washington, DC, January 1979. A representative nongovernment study is Holland Hunter, Ed., *The Future of the Soviet Economy, 1978–1985,* Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 1978.

[2] *DCI Testimony,* p.1. Soviet oil production in 1979 was running at an estimated 11.5 million barrels a day. See Joseph Licari and F. Douglas Whitehouse, "Soviet Resource Allocation in the 1980's: Some Speculations," paper presented at the US Air Force Academy–Rand Corporation Conference on the Economics of National Security, Colorado Springs, CO, Aug. 15–18, 1979, Fig. 1.

[3] Concern about the difficulties that the USSR faces in the next five-year plan and indication of the Soviet Union's lowered expectations come through in two articles published by Premier A.N. Kosygin in 1979. Writing in *Planovoye khozyaystvo* (Moscow), No. 7, 1979, Kosygin spoke of impending manpower shortages and of the need to conserve on the resources consumed in capital investment. In *Kommunist* (Moscow), No. 12, August 1979, the Soviet premier stated: "In the five-year plan henceforth there will be confirmed a limit of state capital investments and of construction-installation jobs."

[4] *Soviet Economic Problems and Prospects,* p. 10.

[5] In a speech to the Nov. 27, 1979, plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Soviet party and state chief L.I. Brezhnev openly expressed dissatisfaction with progress as of the fourth year of the 1976–80 Five-Year Plan. While laying some of the blame on the year 1979, with its adverse "objective factors" (i.e., weather), Brezhnev acknowledged, "if we are to speak of the main reason why bottlenecks and shortcomings still remain in the economy, then it is because of the fact that in the sphere of further raising the efficiency of production and quality of work we have not been able to move forward to the extent envisaged by the plan." *Pravda* (Moscow), Nov. 28, 1979.

[6] Ibid.

[7] In recent years, the Soviet regime has attempted to adopt a conservative trade and financial strategy. Such an approach has helped to cushion the impact of hard-currency grain purchases on the USSR's balance of payments. *DCI Testimony.*

[8] Wet weather in the autumn of 1978 reduced the area sown to winter grains by 5 million hectares (1 hectare = 2.47 acres), as compared to the previous year. The late arrival of spring in 1979 and widespread flooding in parts of the European USSR delayed spring grain planting. Finally, periods of hot, dry winds damaged both winter and spring grain crops in major producing regions.

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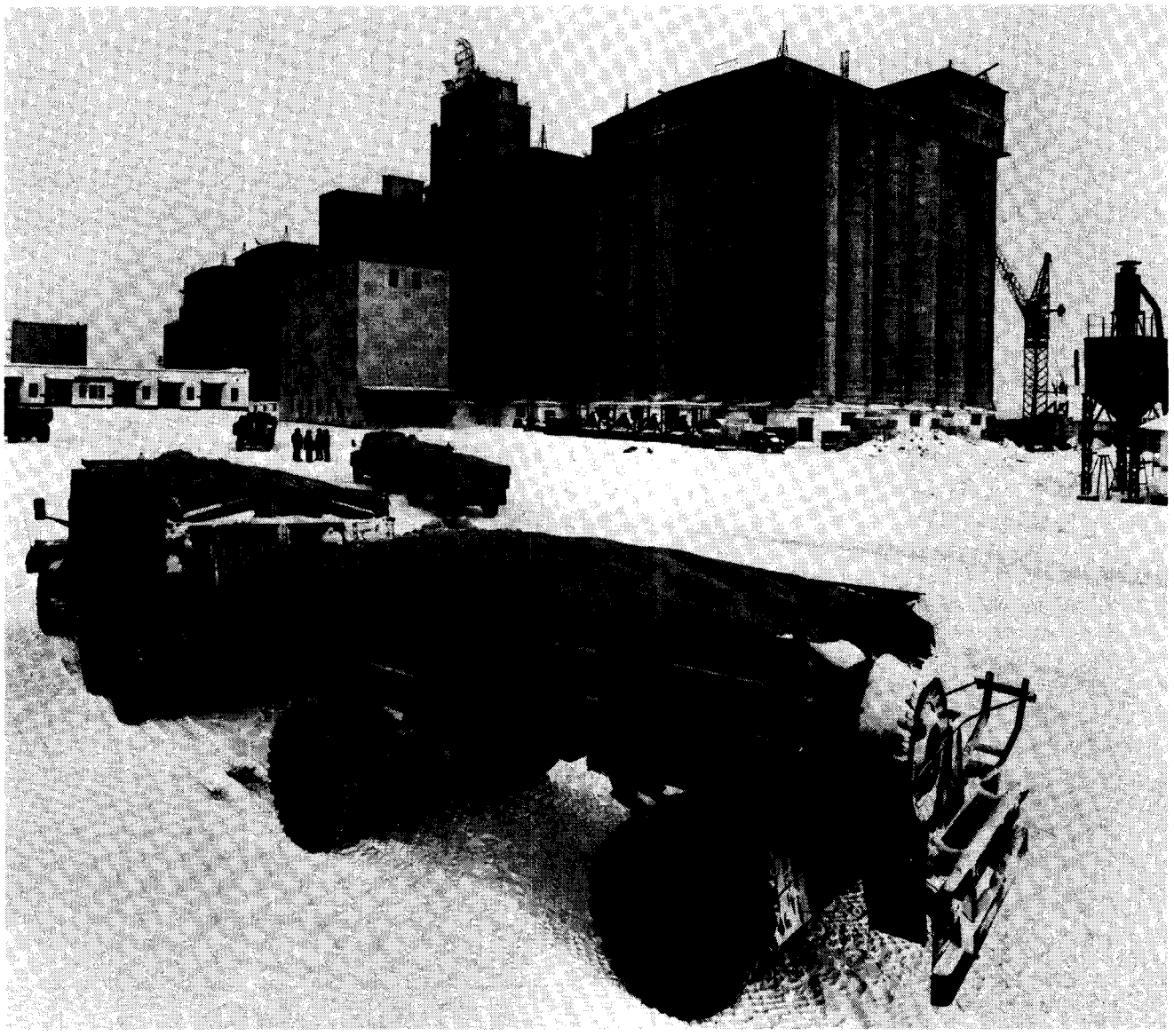
period was below the output for the previous five months, the first time this had occurred in Soviet history.[9] For 1979 as a whole, Soviet GNP grew only 0.7 percent. Agriculture declined 5.7 percent, and industry grew only 2.2 percent. For the years 1978–79, the average annual rate of change in overall factor productivity was negative, -1.4 percent. Oil production appeared to have reached a plateau of 11.7 million barrels a day.[10]

A number of factors—some old and some of more recent vintage—appear to underlie the slowdown in Soviet economic growth. For one, the rate of increase of major production inputs—namely, labor and capital—has continued to decline. Second, productivity of capital stock has been diminishing. There are basically two schools of thought concerning this latter problem. The first, shared by most Western economists—for example, Abram Bergson[11]—seeks to

[9] *DCI Testimony.*

[10] CIA, *The Soviet Economy in 1978–79—and Prospects for the 1980's,* forthcoming.

[11] Abram Bergson, "Soviet Economic Perspectives: Toward a New Growth Model," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), March-April 1973.



Grain arriving at the elevators of the I. Pavlov State Farm in Kustanay Rayon in the Soviet Virgin Lands during harsh winter weather in March 1979.

—TASS from Sovfoto.

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Oil workers battle the elements in Tyumen' Oblast of West Siberia in the ongoing struggle to meet Soviet energy needs from the rich deposits of the region.

—TASS from Sovfoto.

explain the slowdown by postulating a gradual decline in the rate of technological progress. A second and minority view, best represented by M.L. Weitzman,[12] holds that technological progress remains constant and that the decline in the rate of growth is due to the fact that inputs of capital goods are growing faster than inputs of labor, thereby continuously increasing the capital-labor ratio and reducing returns to production factors overall.[13]

By contrast to the above factors, the impending Soviet energy shortage is something qualitatively new. Without adequate energy, the Soviets will not be able to operate all their plant and equipment at full capacity—which in turn will accelerate the downward trend projected for the 1980's.

According to some estimates, the Soviet oil industry may already have entered a no-growth stage in 1979 and may face production declines as early as 1980.[14] Especially significant is the possibility that production in the giant Samotlor field of West Siberia may peak in 1980 or 1981 after many years of operating above the maximum efficient recovery rate. This field accounts for more than half of West Siberian and one fourth of total Soviet oil output. Exploitation of smaller fields in West Siberia is lagging behind plan because of transportation bottlenecks, soaring drilling requirements, and the failure of authorities to provide the necessary equipment and infrastructure (roads, pipelines, electric power, housing).[15] In 1980, there was increased

[12] See his article, "Soviet Postwar Economic Growth and Capital-Labor Substitution," in *American Economic Review* (Menasha, WI), September 1970, pp. 676–92.

[13] While both of these views entail an expectation that the decline in growth will persist, it should be noted that there is a third view which offers a contrasting assessment. S. Gomulka predicted in 1974 that Soviet growth would remain at a level of 6 to 7 percent a year. See his paper, "Soviet Post-War Industrial Growth, Capital-Labor Substitution and Technical Changes: A Re-Examination," presented at the International Slavic Conference, Banff, Canada, September 1974.

[14] See *DCI Testimony* and *Prospects for Soviet Oil Production.* American scholar Marshall I. Goldman took strong exception to the CIA forecasts in *The Washington Post* of Aug. 20, 1979. However, even in refuting the dire CIA estimates, Goldman did seem to acknowledge that Soviet oil production was in serious trouble.

[15] *DCI Testimony.*

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evidence of problems in Soviet oil production.[16]

The possibilities for fuel substitution do not look promising either. In the 1980's, shortfalls in the coal and nuclear power industries are likely.[17] Natural gas production might provide some relief, but as yet the Soviet investment program reveals no major effort to shift the structure of fuel consumption to greater reliance on gas. (Furthermore, higher natural gas consumption could be limited by the reduction of gas exports from Iran to the USSR. In the autumn of 1978, construction stopped on a second trunk line that was to have carried increased quantities of Iranian gas to the USSR.[18]) Aware of the difficulties ahead and presumably anxious to avoid a repeat of the dislocations of the winter of 1978–79, the Soviet government issued a decree in June 1979 that included a number of measures aimed at effecting energy conservation and expanding energy production.[19]

The Soviet manpower situation will also be uniquely tight in the 1980's. As already reflected in the 1976–80 plan, the Soviet Union is in a period of declining increments to its labor force. It is estimated that the natural increase in the working-age population of the USSR will drop from 2.3 million in 1978 to about 300,000 a year in the mid-1980's. The regional aspects of the manpower problem will be particularly critical. During the present decade, net increments to the labor force will come almost exclusively from the less skilled and less mobile Muslim populations of Central Asia and the Transcaucasian republics.[20]

This manpower situation will present serious dilemmas for Soviet investment planners, with important ramifications for growth. While all areas of the USSR will require investment, the leadership will have to decide whether to stress investment in Central Asia, where most of the growth in the labor force will occur and away from which it will be difficult to move the new manpower; in the European portions of the Soviet Union, which are short of labor and raw materials but where investment can be carried out more cheaply by modernizing and expanding existing facilities; or in Siberia, where exploitation of energy and other raw material resources awaits the necessary infrastructure and industrial facilities and where operating costs are nearly double those in the western part of the country.[21] On balance, one would predict that Central Asia and Siberia will preempt an increasing share of an investment pie that is, as we have seen, likely to be growing at a decreasing rate. In the case of Central Asia, moving the available manpower would be sufficiently hard to make such a course unattractive; as for Siberia, its energy resources are essential if the USSR is to offset depletion of oil, coal, and gas deposits elsewhere.

Dividing a Smaller Pie

As growth of the Soviet economy slows in the 1980's, the leadership of the country will have smaller increments of GNP to allocate to investment, consumption, and military expenditures, and hence will face increasingly difficult allocation choices. To reduce growth in investment below the already low current rate of 3 percent a year[22] would seem inadvisable in view of vast needs for new, more energy-efficient production facilities. To reduce growth in consumption would—at the very least—have a negative impact on workers' morale and productivity just when a boost in both is needed most. To reduce growth in defense spending at a time of leadership transition would be equally difficult, since those vying for power will probably be reluctant to press for actions that might alienate the military.

Moreover, no reordering of priorities, however difficult, can be expected to have a major effect on the decline in the overall growth rate. As one Western study concludes: "Resource reallocations on the scale

[16] For example, B. Filanovskiy, a department chief in the USSR State Planning Committee, stated that to meet production goals of the 11th (1981–85) Five-Year Plan there will have to be *2.5 times* the amount of production drilling *(eksplyuatatsionnoye bureniye)* as in 1976–80. Yet, in 1979, he reports, the plan for such drilling was only 82 percent fulfilled. *Planovoye khozyaystvo,* No. 3, 1980.

A.P. Krylov, Chairman of the USSR Academy of Sciences' Scientific Council on Problems of Exploitation of Oil Deposits, predicts that if the Soviet oil industry continues to exploit its oil deposits with current methods, resulting problems of water flooding will lead to an absolute decline in production. *Ekonomika i organizatsiya promyshlennogo proizvodstva* (Novosibirsk), No. 1, 1980.

[17] *DCI Testimony.*

[18] Ibid.

[19] For the text, see *Pravda,* June 16, 1979.

[20] See *DCI Testimony.* The continuing expansion of the Muslim peoples is clear from the following comparison of statistics for natural reproduction (per 1,000 inhabitants) in 1978 in the republics heavily populated by Muslim citizens and in the other republics of the Soviet Union. *Muslim republics:* Azerbaydzhan, 18.2; Kazakhstan, 17.0; Kirgiziya, 22.3; Tadzhikistan, 29.2; Turkmeniya, 26.4; Uzbekistan, 27.0. *Other republics:* Armenia, 16.7; Belorussia, 6.8; Estonia, 2.7; Georgia, 9.7; Latvia, 1.2; Lithuania, 5.3; Moldavia, 10.3; RSFSR, 5.6; Ukraine, 4.0. See *Narodnoye khozyaystvo SSSR v 1978 g.* (The USSR National Economy in 1978), Moscow, Statistika, 1979, p. 27.

[21] *DCI Testimony.* Extraction and processing of Siberian resources, as well as the transportation of them to urban-industrial regions in the European USSR, are costly. In some instances—for example, the long-distance transmission of coal-generated electric power—reliance on Siberia is still not technically feasible.

[22] Ibid.

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of the recent past are not likely solutions to the basic problems underlying future Soviet growth."[23]

Yet, something will have to give. Since the growth of investment is already at historically low levels and further reduction would only slow the rate of increase of GNP more, increased stringency in this sector is not that palatable an alternative. If investment is not sacrificed, the issue would boil down to one of guns *vs.* butter, i.e., the Soviet leadership would see an end to the comfortable situation, which existed during the 1960's and 1970's, of being able to afford both guns *and* butter.

If the Soviets move in the direction that tradition dictates—that is, reduction of consumption and of development of the sectors producing consumer goods, including agriculture—such reallocation may have a more far-reaching and unwelcome effect than a mere decline in worker productivity. This prediction rests on the proposition that during the Brezhnev era, the Soviet regime's success in raising the living standard of the population has constituted one of the cornerstones of the USSR's stability and that a prolonged and significant decline in the rate of growth of consumption or, even worse, a virtual stagnation or drop in living standards could lead to sociopolitical instability. Certainly the Brezhnev leadership has acted as if it believed such an assessment of the situation. From 1964 through 1978, for example, total consumption grew at an annual rate of 4.6 percent, which translated into a per capita increase of some 3.4 percent a year.[24]

In this connection, it should be underscored that a Western projection for 1981–85 based on the assumption of only a moderate decline in overall growth envisages an annual rate of increase of only 2.1 percent in total, and 1.2 percent in per capita, consumption—that is, roughly half and one third of the respective rates for the preceding 15 years.[25] Were further inroads to be made into these very modest projected rates by reallocation away from consumption, then there would for all practical purposes be a freezing or even a decline in the standard of living of the Soviet population. If the leadership does subscribe to the view linking consumer satisfaction with stability, it is likely to view such a prospect with considerable misgivings.[26] Fear of the possible sociopolitical consequences could lead Soviet leaders to establish a more restrictive general political climate or, alternatively, to place consumption still higher on their list of priorities and this time at a clearer and higher cost to the other resource claimants, especially the military.

The burden of military spending on the Soviet economy has been significant. The US Central Intelligence Agency has estimated that in 1975, military requirements—both direct and indirect—claimed the following shares of the output of major branches of Soviet heavy industry: energy, one sixth; chemicals, one sixth; metallurgy, one fifth; and machinery and metalworking, one third.[27] In the 1970's, according to another study, military spending claimed 11 to 12 percent of Soviet GNP. Military outlays increased at 3–4 percent a year over that period.[28]

The level of economic development achieved in the last decade does provide the USSR a sufficient base—economic slowdown or no—to maintain a strong strategic and conventional military posture in the 1980's, one that is highly competitive with that of the West (on the assumption the military expenditures of the latter stay at current levels). Nevertheless, the rate of Soviet economic growth will have some bearing on the Soviet posture and on Moscow's attitudes toward competition in armaments.

If the annual rate of growth of Soviet GNP in the 1980's is in the neighborhood of 3 percent a year, i.e., at the upper end of the range of projections, then for the foreseeable future the Soviet Union can continue to raise the level of its military expenditures at a rate similar to that of the last decade without significantly increasing the existing burden on civilian economic programs. In this case, Soviet military strength would remain competitive with the West in the 1980's even if the Western allies upped their military expenditures. If, however, Soviet economic growth is lower, the leadership would face a more difficult set of choices. It could sustain the rate of increase in military spending observed in the 1970's, but only at the cost of disrupting the existing balance in the economy. Alterna-

[23] *Simulations of Soviet Growth Options to 1985*, p. 22.

[24] Derived from M. Elizabeth Denton, "Soviet Consumer Policy: Trends and Prospects," in US Congress, Joint Economic Committee, *Soviet Economy in a Time of Change*, Washington, DC, US Government Printing Office, Oct. 10, 1979, Vol. 1, p. 766, Table 2.

[25] *Simulations of Soviet Growth Options to 1985*, p. 3.

[26] Further intensifying the potential impact of this stagnation are perceptible signs of decline in social mobility—for example, educational mobility. Thus, from 1960 to 1978, the percentage of day-course middle-school graduates admitted to full-time day studies in higher education establishments declined from 36.4 percent to 20.7 percent. See *Narodnoye khozyaystvo SSSR v 1978 g.*, pp., 468, 478; and *Narodnoye khozyaystvo SSSR v 1968 g.* (The USSR National Economy in 1968), Moscow, Statistika, 1969, p. 687.

[27] CIA, *Estimated Soviet Defense Spending in Rubles, 1970–1975*, SR 76–101210, Washington, DC, May 1976.

[28] CIA, *Soviet and US Defense Activities, 1970–79: A Dollar Cost Comparison*, SR 80–10005, Washington, DC, January 1980. According to this report, the 3 percent rate of increase was based upon dollar calculations; calculated in rubles and Soviet prices, the rate would have been 4–5 percent.

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tively, it could allow the rate of increase in military spending to slow, at the risk of possible deterioration in the USSR's military posture vis-à-vis the West. Consequently, there would appear to be significant economic disincentives for the Soviet side to get involved in an unrestricted arms race, above and beyond the fact that such a race could enhance the risk of war between the superpowers.

One caveat is necessary here. If the Soviet leadership concludes that the USSR's basic security is endangered, whether by a more rapid military buildup in the West or by a modernizing China, Moscow will doubtless take appropriate measures to increase military procurements regardless of costs. Nevertheless, two simple points should be made: (a) The cost of any step-up in military expenditures will be much higher, the burden much more painful, than at any time in the post-Stalin era. (b) Under these circumstances, the Soviet leaders' once almost automatic satisfaction of the demands and requirements of their military establishment may become much more tempered, and proposed expansions of military programs may be subjected to a much closer, more critical scrutiny.

Political Repercussions

The economic dilemmas facing the Soviet Union in the 1980's have a number of important potential political repercussions. To be sure, major emergencies in the economic, social, or political arenas are nothing new to the USSR; it has solved or coexisted with a number of them in its history. Yet, neither the post-Stalin leadership nor the Soviet system itself as it exists today is conditioned to deal with the kinds of emergencies looming in the 1980's. In the past, problems tended to be concentrated in one area at a time and/or were responsive to a mass mobilization effort—what one might call the strategy of a hammerblow. The approaching problems are spread across the board to many vital areas and require sophisticated manipulation simultaneously on many levels—what might be called the strategy of a scalpel.

On one front, the problem of declining growth calls for a fundamental reform of the entire system of planning and management, with obvious political ramifications. The Soviet leadership simply cannot reverse the reduction in the rates of growth merely by exercising the traditional policy levers under its control. While a strong, imaginative, highly interventionist leadership redirecting resources at the macroeconomic level may bring, and is in fact a sine qua non of, *partial* success, the Achilles' heel of the Soviet political economy remains its microeconomic structures, which are highly inefficient, lacking in autonomy, and discouraging to innovation.

The pressures on resources discussed above likewise will create new tensions within the Soviet decision-making apparatus, testing its ability (developed under Brezhnev) to arrive at collective decisions through a process of bargaining and compromise. The relatively low level of conflict among Soviet party and state administrative elites in the 1970's reflected changes made in the structure of the Soviet party-state over the last decade, as well as the policies pursued by the post-Khrushchev leadership in organizational, political, economic, and ideological matters. In the first years, the result was improvement in the power position and satisfaction of the group interests of almost all institutional segments of the Soviet political elite. This situation was reinforced by the healthy rate of growth of the Soviet economy, which made possible the partial satisfaction of the expectations of all elite groups. The declining growth rates of the 1980's and resulting budgetary constraints will create conditions for a much sharper competition for allocations among interest groups, i.e., for a much less benign political climate.

No easy choices are available to any set of Soviet leaders in the 1980's. The resource allocation dilemmas that loom are likely to prove increasingly intractable from a political as well as an economic standpoint. There will be strongly conflicting pressures from different elements within the Soviet bureaucracy to increase investment, to maintain consumption levels and keep up allocations to agriculture, and to avoid cutbacks in military spending. Whether the post-Brezhnev leadership will be strong enough to impose a coherent and effective strategy for dealing with these demands is uncertain. What is clear is that in the mid-1980's, marginal shifts in resource allocations will become more and more contested as energy and labor shortages take their toll.

The unavoidable major shortages in manpower that are coming and the increased economic importance of those labor increments that do emerge may exacerbate the ethnic-national problems of the Soviet Union, especially with regard to the areas inhabited by Muslim peoples. (This is in addition to the general increase in interrepublic competition for resources that one would expect to result from any economic slowdown.) It is almost exclusively from the Muslim population living in Central Asia and Transcaucasia that the new Soviet labor force in the mid-1980's will stem. As noted above, this situation presents the Soviet leadership with two choices—to try to "persuade" the new

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Kadyr Sapargeldyev, a veteran schoolteacher of 35 years in the town of Iolotan' in the Turkmen Republic of the USSR, and himself father of 10.

—TASS from Sovfoto.

labor force to move to European Russia or Siberia or to try to move a major part of the investment activity to the labor supply in Central Asia.[29]

A large-scale out-migration of the Muslim population to labor-short areas of the European Soviet Union is not likely, and Soviet authorities have not acted as if they believe that encouraging such an out-migration would prove a successful policy. Beyond the considerable cultural barriers inhibiting emigration, there are economic factors—such as the relatively high rural living standards in Central Asia—that strengthen the ties of the Central Asians to their native areas.

Adoption of the second alternative could have several adverse consequences. First, it could foster a great deal of dissatisfaction among the European republics of the USSR by diverting contested capital resources to areas of non-European nationality (such dissatisfaction would, of course, be intensified by a simultaneous diversion of capital to Siberia as well). Second, it could create among the Central Asians social and cultural stresses of the kind inherent in rapid industrialization. Finally, it could increase the hostility of native political-administrative elites to encroachment on their autonomy, particularly personified in the additional Russian bureaucrats who would certainly come to Central Asia in connection with any massive influx of Russian capital.

In allocating resources and contemplating the possibility of economic slowdown and energy shortages in the USSR, Soviet leaders must also weigh the possible impact of these developments on economic and political relations with its East European client states. The latter rely heavily on the Soviet Union for energy and raw materials, and their needs in these areas are likely to increase in the 1980's. Yet, drastic reductions in Soviet oil exports to Eastern Europe may be the only way for Moscow to contain the damages to the Soviet economy of the energy shortage likely to emerge in the USSR by 1985.

Moscow's ability to deliver energy and raw materials has long been one positive means of enticing, rather than having to compel, East European ruling elites to maintain their allegiance to the Soviet Union. Furthermore, economic difficulties in these countries have a tendency to translate quickly and directly into dangerous sociopolitical instability. As things stand, however, economic prospects for the East European Communist countries in the 1980's are, if anything, less promising than those for the Soviet Union, particularly in the cases of Poland and East Germany, and to a lesser extent Czechoslovakia. The countries of Eastern Europe have a heavy and growing indebtedness to the West, and any Soviet decision that would force them to find their needed energy resources outside the Soviet Union—in hard-currency markets—would be a major blow, one that might not only endanger political stability in individual countries but also undermine allegiance to Moscow.[30]

The USSR has experienced troubles with its East European empire in the past, but these have tended to crop up in different countries at different times. As a consequence, Moscow has managed to deal with them individually. But the economic squeeze of the 1980's would seem to diminish the chances that this good fortune will last.

[29] For further discussion of this problem, see Michael Rywkin, "Central Asia and Soviet Manpower," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), January-February 1979, pp. 1–13.

[30] On these matters, see Ernst Kux, "Growing Tensions in Eastern Europe," ibid., March-April 1980, pp. 21–37.

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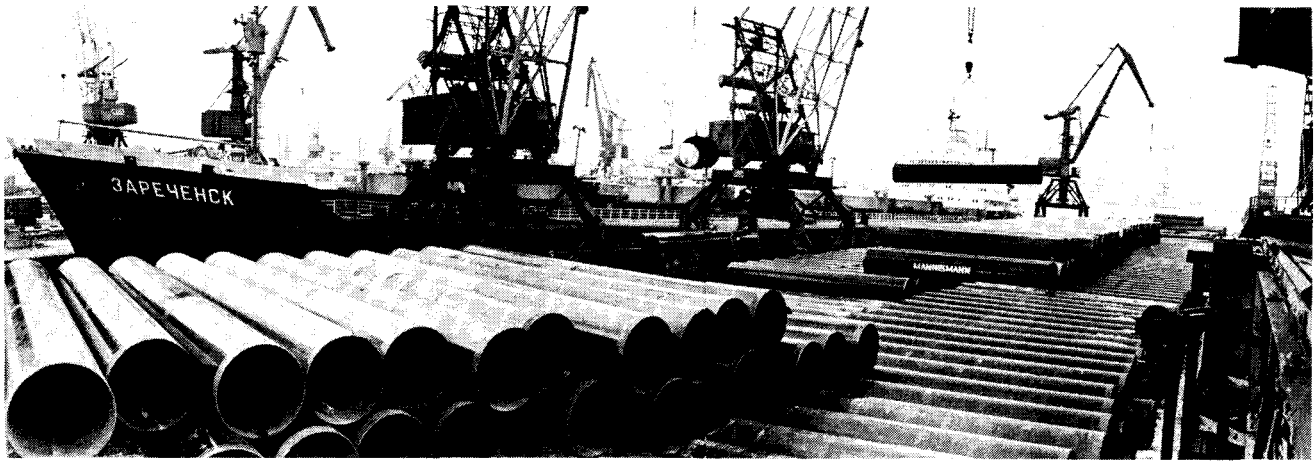
The continuing economic slowdown, and especially the oil situation, will likewise create pressures for adjustment of Soviet trade policy with other areas in the 1980's. Moscow will need imports from the West more than ever before, and the leadership may have to abandon its current conservative financial stance regarding trade with the West. The Soviets will continue to require substantial imports of grain, steel products (especially large-diameter pipe for oil and gas pipelines), and a wide range of other oil and gas technology. But, as domestic oil production trails off and Moscow attempts to satisfy competing East European and domestic Soviet energy needs, oil exports for hard currency are likely to fall. This state of affairs will limit Moscow's capacity to import grain, steel, and Western machinery and equipment. Maintenance and expansion of Soviet trade with the developed capitalist states will thus depend increasingly upon Moscow's willingness and ability to increase markedly the USSR's medium- and long-term debt to those states, as well as upon its success in negotiating compensation agreements with Western firms so as to ensure an expansion of exports.

That such an adjustment in Soviet policy will actually occur is not altogether certain, but it is a real possibility. After all, the Soviet leadership in the 1970's made a basic decision to turn from an autarkic economic policy toward greater dependence on exchange with the West. This decision provided the background to, and served as a concomitant of, the USSR's switch to détente in foreign policy. Subsequently, to be sure, the policy of détente did not bring the USSR all the economic benefits that Soviet leaders had originally envisioned it would, and Moscow itself cast doubt on the viability of the policy by interpreting détente as giving it freedom to undertake military and military-oriented activities in the non-European areas of political competition between the USSR and the United States. However, it is conceivable that if the United States succeeds in convincing Soviet leaders of, on the one hand, its resolve and ability to resist Moscow's interpretation of what détente permits the USSR to do militarily in the Third World and, on the other, its willingness to engage in real economic cooperation with the USSR, Soviet leaders will feel greater pressure for restraint about trying to exploit marginal targets of opportunity and will focus upon the economic considerations that inclined them toward the détente policy in the first place. Certainly, the objective aspects of the situation would seem to impel them in that direction.

Decision Framework

Today, as the Soviet economic plan for 1981-85 is being formulated and measures directed toward the 1990's are being approved, the pressures and dilemmas discussed above are already objective facts of Soviet socioeconomic and political life. Moreover, they are likely to intensify in the coming years. The Soviet leadership must clearly make some hard decisions in the near future and then be willing and able to adjust them subsequently to evolving reality over the coming decade. These decisions will determine not so much the degree of the Soviet economic slowdown in the



The Soviet freighter Zarechensk unloading wide-diameter steel pipes for gas transmission at Murmansk. The pipes, manufactured by the West German Mannesmann firm, are to be used to exploit Soviet gas deposits and are to be paid for by exports of natural gas to West Germany.

—TASS from Sovfoto.

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next five-year plan—this is almost preordained—but who in the main will lose because of it and, as important, what steps can still be taken to reverse the trend and salvage as much as possible by the end of the 1980's.

Just how Soviet leaders react to the domestic economic problems that are going to accumulate during the 1980's will depend on four major variables: (1) the degree of the actual slowdown in the next decade, (2) their perceptions of the long-range economic prospects, (3) the degree of maneuverability that they have available to them in dealing with economic problems, and (4) the influence of the political succession to Brezhnev on their economic policies. Let us examine each of these in order.

With regard to the first, Soviet and Western economists, while agreeing that the 1980's will see a slowdown in Soviet economic growth, differ significantly in their evaluations of the likely extent of that slowdown. As noted above, the projections range from a prediction of stagnation of Soviet GNP at the pessimistic extreme, through annual growth at a slow 1.0 to 1.5 percent rate, to annual growth of 2.5 to 3.0 percent in the most optimistic projections. (Soviet economists with whom I have discussed the matter in Moscow incline toward the latter estimates, with some dissent on the downward side.) Differences in the prognosis stem in part from evaluations of the Soviet leadership's ability to counter the trend with intelligent and reformist policies. A more significant source, however, is varying opinions about the likely magnitude of the Soviet energy shortage and the options available to minimize its impact.

For an economist to forecast the annual growth rate of an enormous economy over long periods of time is of course a risky and inexact enterprise. In the Soviet case, the only certainty among economists is the prediction that rates will decline. For the political analyst, however, the *degree* of decline is the most crucial element in estimating sociopolitical consequences. In the case of the Soviet Union, realization of the most pessimistic alternative—stagnation—or even a growth rate of 1.0 to 1.5 percent would precipitate a sociopolitical crisis of major proportions. By contrast, the most optimistic alternative—a 3 percent growth rate—would, while creating serious problems for the system, maintain conditions permitting Soviet leaders to "muddle through," especially in the first years of the decade. Although the extreme points of the continuum cannot be overlooked in any analysis of the sociopolitical implications of slowdown, a mean position is the more likely outcome in the next decade. Both the most and the least pessimistic alternatives would require for their fulfillment a rare confluence of either the most favorable or the least favorable passive and active factors, and a random distribution of those factors would appear a more realistic expectation.

When we come to the question of how Soviet leaders view the long-range prospects for the Soviet economy, i.e., of what they see beyond the difficulties of the 1980's, a fundamental point needs to be made. The Soviet leadership acknowledges that the trend toward a slowdown of economic growth is a secular one brought about by the limits of Soviet extensive growth, and they have spoken of the need to stimulate the intensive factors of production, particularly productivity and technological progress, in order to counteract the trend.[31] Moreover, they appear to recognize that the impact of the next decade's decline in growth will be seriously aggravated by the projected situations with regard to energy supply and the distribution of the population.[32] However, things farther down the road, beyond the 1980's, may look different to them.

In the case of the demographic situation, for example, all signs point to a considerable improvement in the 1990's. If the supply of new labor is not likely to return to the peak of the early 1970's, it will rise sharply as compared to the mid-1980's.[33]

The energy situation is more complicated and unpredictable. As we well know, the Soviet Union possesses the largest known reserves of oil of any country in the world. But the bulk of these are located in regions of Siberia and the Far East that are most difficult to reach, explore, and exploit. Without sizable investments of capital, Western technology, and time, these areas cannot be developed. Thus, a major policy decision is required. Unless a decision for an all-out attack on the energy problem from the supply side is made soon, the present trend will not be reversed by the late 1980's or early 1990's. If it is made soon, then the

[31] Kosygin in his *Planovoye khozyaystvo* article cited above spoke emphatically of the need for "intensification of production, relentless growth of its efficiency." Referring to capital construction, the Soviet premier stated, "For many years we rapidly increased the volume of capital investments, the rate of growth of which markedly exceeded the rate of growth of national income. From the results of three years of the current five-year period, the rate of growth of produced national income was higher than the growth of capital investments. This is a positive tendency, bearing witness to increase in the efficiency of social production."

[32] For example, Kosygin has declared: "We must learn to manage efficiently and successfully develop the economy under conditions of an unchanged and in the long term even an absolutely decreasing number of persons employed in material production." Ibid.

[33] From 1990 to 1991, the natural increase of the Soviet working-age population should be some 500,000; from 1995 to 1996, some 800,000. Unpublished estimates prepared by the Foreign Demographic Analysis Division of the US Bureau of the Census.

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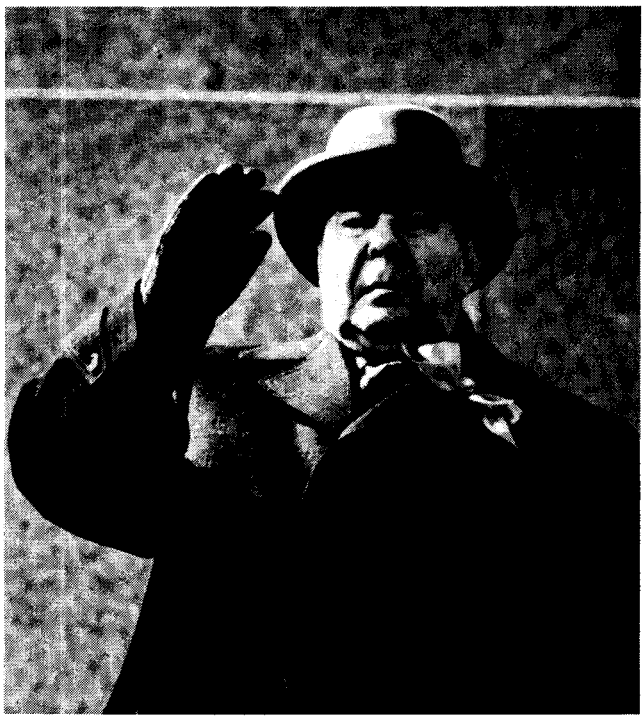
specific difficulties of the 1980's might well be alleviated by the start of the next decade.

In light of this general picture, the Soviet leaders of the 1980's might well make decisions that are the least difficult politically. They may choose to "tough it through" the next decade and await better times in the 1990's. This would, of course, again postpone confronting the basic long-range problem of Soviet development—the need to adjust the managerial-planning instruments of the economy to the requirement of intensive growth. Such a policy could be seen as "muddling through" at a lower level of achievement.

However, this brings us to the third set of considerations. The policy of "muddling through" or "business as usual" depends heavily on the margin of maneuverability available in the 1980's for allocating resources. In the long run, it seems that the simultaneous pursuit of increased military spending, rising consumption, and growing overall investment—that is, the policy of the Brezhnev era—cannot be sustained. In the short run, the Soviet leadership can hope to preserve military and consumer priorities by cutting overall investment sharply. According to a recent estimate, a reduction by one half in the growth of investment (which would fall most heavily on availability of funds for the capital goods industries and on long-range agricultural investment) would permit continuation of the rise in military spending at present levels and a rate of increase in consumption of approximately 1.5 percent a year.[34] Such a strategy of drastic cuts in investment growth in the coming five-year plan would permit, for a time at least, production of both guns and butter.

The crucial term here is "for a time." In the longer run, such a policy cannot provide a solution. First of all, a decision to cut both investment growth and the proportion of investment in the GNP would presumably be predicated to a large extent on the assumption that the energy shortages of the early and mid-1980's would leave underutilized larger industrial capacities than is normal under Soviet conditions and that therefore an effort to utilize them more fully would produce industrial growth without additional investments. However, this kind of procedure could only be a one-time operation. By the mid-1980's—if we assume the correctness of the possible Soviet calculation—the reserve of underutilized capacities would have been largely exploited once and for all. The investment starvation of the Soviet economy would then begin to be felt very deeply, and this time there would be no possibility of avoiding difficult allocation decisions on the macroeconomic level.



Soviet General Secretary L.I. Brezhnev on the reviewing stand at the 1979 May Day parade in Moscow's Red Square.

—Sipa Press from Black Star.

Second, and more important, if there has ever been a time in the development of the USSR since Stalin that large investments have been needed, it is now. For example, the energy situation itself cannot be ameliorated without gigantic inputs into the development of Siberia and the Far East. One has to assume that this is clear to any configuration of Soviet leaders and that therefore the investment cuts would be made primarily in other economic sectors. But draconian cuts in other economic sectors would frustrate the immediate needs of technological progress and the essential renovation of the outmoded Soviet industrial plant. Their effect would only be to deepen the decline in Soviet economic growth and to produce yet another delay, costly in the long haul, in maximization of the intensive factors of Soviet growth. Thus, such a course might postpone hard choices and avoid far-reaching reforms, but it would solve nothing, as would become painfully evident by the mid-1980's.

Yet the situation is rendered even more complex and unpredictable by the fact that these economic decisions will be made in an environment of succession politics. The process of succession—combining the ultimate replacement of the top leader with an in-

[34] See Licari and Whitehouse, loc. cit.

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evitable turnover of major proportions in the top central elite and entrance into high political roles of the representatives of the post-Stalin generation of elites—has for all practical purposes already begun.[35]

Departure of the Great Purge generation of leaders is in itself an important turning point in Soviet *political* history, and its coincidence with a major turning point in Soviet *economic* history marks a time of unusual opportunities and openings for change. However, the Soviet Union will be able to capitalize on these opportunities only if its new leadership is imaginative and (what is crucial) strong. How soon is such a strong leadership likely to emerge from the succession process?

The most probable course of development after Brezhnev's departure is the selection of an interim leader, who during a short term of two to four years in office will fail to achieve a strong position within the oligarchy and will yield to a younger leader, who will in turn require several years to consolidate his power. In this event, the earliest that one *may* have a strong leader is the second half of the 1980's.

There are, of course, other possibilities. For example, an interim leader chosen from the Brezhnev generation could remain in office longer than suggested above. He might hold strong opinions different from those of his colleagues on the desirable direction of Soviet policies, and he might succeed in allying himself with a younger generation of officials whom he would introduce in large numbers into the central hierarchy. It is not to be excluded, either, that Brezhnev might be followed directly by a younger leader and that the entire pattern of interim succession might thereby be avoided. While these last two scenarios might surface a strong and established leadership team before the mid-1980's, they appear less likely than the one suggested above.

Prospects for Change

In the 1970's, the Soviet system displayed a high level of stability and of continuity, and a marginality of change. But the pressures for change that will emerge in the current decade may seriously shake this stability. To be sure, any changes that might ensue from such pressures during the 1980's in all probability would *not* constitute a systemic crisis and would *not* lead to a transformation of the Soviet system of government; nevertheless, they might make the Soviet Union significantly different from the Soviet Union of the 1970's.

In 1979, according to information from Moscow, a new major reform of Soviet economic planning and management was already under active discussion in central institutions. An official resolution seeming to suggest that one is forthcoming was published in the summer of the year.[36] Speaking with Soviet economists and political scientists, one is struck by the extent to which the need for major reform is recognized and the introduction of one is expected. What the focal point of such a reform should be is obviously a matter of dispute and major differences of opinion.

As far as it is possible to judge, the reform that is being actively discussed or prepared will attempt to reconcile two basic but clashing tendencies with respect to reform. One of these tendencies is to respond to the new difficulties and demands primarily with greater centralization and more discipline, accompanied by a better flow and processing of information between the micro- and macroeconomic levels. The other tendency is to switch the center of gravity of everyday economic decision-making to the direct producer and to intermediate links between the producer and the macroeconomic level. This would require a radical shift in the weight of quantitative and qualitative planning indices, in the system of incentives and rewards, and in the type of association between planning, supplying, and production units. Of these, incentives are crucial. It is, after all, not a lack of proficient cadres that restrains the effectiveness of Soviet enterprises. Soviet industry today employs three times as many engineers as does US industry, but the USSR's industrial output is only two thirds that of the US. Soviet agriculture employs five times as many agronomists, but its productivity is less than one third that of US agriculture. The existing system of planning, incentives, and rewards discourages innovation, encourages waste, and punishes initiative.

Unfortunately, a reform—such as appears to be in the works—aimed at partially satisfying both these

[35] See Seweryn Bialer, "Succession and Turnover of Soviet Elites," *Journal of International Affairs* (New York, NY), Fall/Winter 1978, pp. 181–200.

[36] In July, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the USSR Council of Ministers adopted an extensive and important resolution, "On Improving Planning and Strengthening the Economic Mechanism's Influence in Enhancing Production Efficiency and Work Quality." The text was printed in *Pravda*, July 29, 1979, and a translation is available in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press* (Columbus, OH), Aug. 22, 1979, pp. 1–6, 14.

The most noteworthy departure in this resolution was the decision to increase the role of the *five-year* plans as against the *annual* plans. If implemented, this decision could lead to a decline in day-to-day supervision by planning authorities and increase the flexibility of management.

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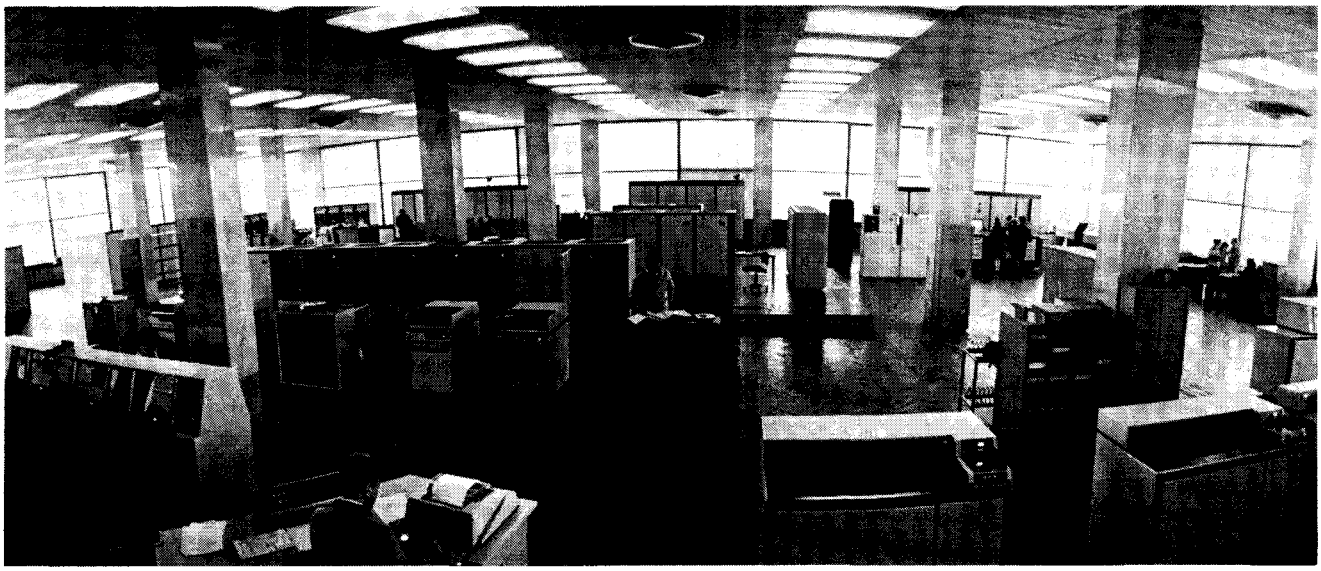

A fisheye photo of the main machine room at the Main Computer Center of the USSR State Planning Committee (GOSPLAN).

—Novosti from Sovfoto.

tendencies would seem to ensure the worst possible results. It would probably produce no more improvements in the qualitative indices of economic performance — which are now decisive—than the other reforms which have preceded it.

The Soviet Union has many very talented economists and planners, and has major research institutions well suited to the job of remodeling the system of planning and management. Moreover, virtually everyone, not only among experts but among party and government leaders as well, admits that the present system is able to manage economic growth well only when that growth is based on increased *amounts* of the basic factors of production. It is generally accepted that some change of the economic system is required in order to generate growth based on increased *efficiency* per factor unit.

Yet while this truth is basically accepted by all, there enters a crucial set of subquestions which provoke acrimonious disagreement or simply vacillation and paralysis. For example, How far-reaching do changes have to be to activate "intensive" factors of growth? What changes should there be? How should the transition from the existing to a new economic mechanism be effected? What will convince the system directors that the gains from the reforms will be a fair trade-off for undesirable political side-effects and interim high costs?

On the surface, questions of the extent and nature of the reforms seem the most hotly debated between the centralizers and the supporters of a flexible approach.[37] A large group of Soviet economists and virtually all Western specialists would agree that small-scale tinkering can no longer suffice and that "What is to be done" is to change from a system of guidance based on *administrative orders* to one based on *economic parameters*.[38] Such a change would constitute a major watershed, the ramifications of which for a socialist economy were described by the late Polish émigré economist Janusz Zielinski thus:

It seems that such a watershed does exist in terms of the abolition (or retention) of direct planning at plan executants level. It is extremely important to notice that abolition of direct planning at plan executants level means also the abolition of the ratchet principle—planning (and rewarding) from the achieved level—with all its far-reaching negative economic consequences both in the sphere of plan construction (bargaining for low/high input/output plans, falsifying information in the planning process) and in its implementation (keeping "reserves" for use in the

[37] Even Brezhnev, in his Nov. 27, 1979, Central Committee speech cited in fn. 5, has borne witness to the conflict: "It is important that higher bodies do not infringe on the rights given to enterprises, associations, and labor collectives."

[38] The contrast between the two approaches has been capsulized by a Hungarian economist in the following fashion: "The difference between the socialist market model according to plan and the model relying on plan directives can be summed up by saying that [in the former case] the planning of the national economy is kept up but obligatory plan indices are omitted." B. Csikos-Nagy, *Socialist Economic Policy*, London, Longman, 1973, p. 44.

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Line management of Soviet industry: a session of the technical council of the BELAVTOMAZ production association in Minsk, Belorussia. BELAVTOMAZ manufactures heavy-duty trucks.

—TASS from Sovfoto.

planning period, which means keeping actual enterprise productivity permanently below what its managers ***know*** *to be possible).*[39]

However, the crux of the difficulties concerning the reform may well have to do with the other two questions —the mechanism of its introduction and the probable political-economic trade-offs.[40]

There exist three clear, interconnected sets of contradictions with regard to the last two questions which tend to constitute a vicious circle, impeding any serious effort to introduce reforms in the Soviet system. First, the initial period of reform is immensely costly, not unlike investment in a plant before it starts to produce. Disorganization is inevitable; temporary decline in productivity, most likely. Reserves are required to carry the economy through this difficult initial stage. However, the poor shape of the economy and the tautness of present planning—factors which would induce the leadership to introduce the reform in the first place—leave few such reserves. Second, only a far-reaching reform has a chance to be effective in the long run and is worth trying. Yet a far-reaching reform is the most difficult. It requires the change of deeply ingrained habits, of ways of doing business which have been inculcated through generations. If the need for thorough reform is not generally recognized, it must be forced through by a strong, consistent leadership. Third, the effective introduction of a far-reaching reform has to be carried out without hesitation across the board, not in a piecemeal way. But until the effects of such a reform are tested and recognized as effective, the necessary determination and consistency are likely to be lacking.

As we know from past Soviet experience (particularly the flirtation with Libermanism[41]), the response to these contradictions tends to be largely self-defeating. Of all the variants of reform, the leadership selects the one that would cause the least disturbance and would

[39] Janusz G. Zielinski, "On System Remodeling in Poland: A Pragmatic Approach," *Soviet Studies* (Glasgow), January 1978, p. 6. Emphasis in original.

[40] Zielinski, loc. cit., discusses these problems. His essay launched a general discussion of economic reforms in Communist societies, published in subsequent issues of *Soviet Studies*.

[41] The theories of Yevsey Liberman figured strongly in reforms discussed and partially introduced at the outset of the Brezhnev era. The reforms were supposedly designed to increase the role of material incentives and profit-based performance indicators in decision-making by enterprise managers.

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require the least cost and effort—that is to say, a compromise solution. Instead of introducing it across the board and with determination, they want to try it on an experimental basis and limited scale. Consequently, the results of the reform are far from conclusive and even disappointing, an outcome that in turn fuels the arguments of opponents, who prevent its further implementation. The leadership reverts to traditional ways of doing business and further half-hearted tinkering with the system. Piecemeal and well-intentioned partial reforms, instead of transforming the traditional economic system, are absorbed and changed by this system. *This political mechanism explains the inherent stability of the traditional economic system and the inherent instability of reform efforts in the Soviet Union.*

One should not make the mistake of picturing the Soviet reform debate as one between reluctant central leaders, on the one hand, and eager plant managers, on the other hand. The divisions are much more blurred and twisted, running vertically and zigzag throughout the political-managerial establishment. If anything, the inertia might even be stronger at the bottom and middle levels than at the top. As one Western analyst recently observed, "After sixty years of experience with a socialist economy run by government agencies . . . , nearly everyone seems to have found ways to turn its shortcomings to individual advantage."[42] In this situation, the top central leadership has not merely to agree to a reform to make it a reality, it has to push hard to overcome the resistance of habit and interest at lower levels if it wants to succeed.

[42] Gertrude E. Schroeder, "The Soviet Economy on a Treadmill of Reforms," in *Soviet Economy in a Time of Change*, Vol. 1, p. 313.

For all these reasons, it is easy to understand why one analysis has concluded:

. . . a major economic reform would disturb established balances in both political and economic power. It would be strongly opposed by the state bureaucracy where jobs, careers, and political influence would be at stake, as well as by the party bureaucracy, whose control over economic decision-making and resource allocation would be threatened. Faced with uncertain long-run benefits, probably high short-run costs, and certain strong opposition, a Soviet leadership of any foreseeable composition would probably opt against taking such risks.[43]

Yet such a judgment may be premature.

At no point in the past have the pressures for change been so great. This is not to argue that time is running out on the system, for it still possesses enormous reserves of stability. But the economic emergencies facing the Soviet Union in the 1980's, when combined with the opening afforded by the approaching succession of leadership and elites, seem uniquely conducive to serious efforts to reform the traditional economic system. Should actual Soviet growth and energy problems in the 1980's fall within the range of the most pessimistic of the projections noted above, the USSR will need a reform—and a successful one at that—to avoid being condemned to a process not simply of "muddling through," but of "muddling down."

[43] CIA, *Organization and Management in the Soviet Economy: The Search for Panaceas*, ER 77-10769, Washington, DC, December 1977, p. 21.

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Political Succession and the Soviet Policy Agenda

By George W. Breslauer

With the Brezhnev succession almost upon us, discussion of the future of the Soviet Union has acquired an unusual measure of topical interest and importance. Aside from questions of systemic stability, observers typically are interested in such questions as who is likely to occupy the leading positions in the Soviet government and Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), what challenges (socioeconomic, political, and international) are likely to face the new Soviet leaders, and how the new Soviet leaders are likely to respond to those challenges. This article will focus on the last of these questions—specifically, on the prospects for significant change in Soviet foreign and domestic policy during the 1980's.

In approaching the subject, it is important to recognize that this will be the third major political succession since the death of Yosif Stalin, and we would be unwise to ignore the courses of past successions in constructing our images of the future.[1] This article, then, will begin by exploring the successions after the death of Stalin and the fall of Nikita Khrushchev in 1964, with particular reference to two questions. What has been the impact of political succession on the Soviet policy agenda, and how has the political process involved in changing administrations affected the timing and types of policies considered and adopted? In this undertaking, it should be noted, the emphasis will be on *similarities* in policy and process during the rise of Khrushchev and Leonid I. Brezhnev, similarities that existed despite manifold differences between the two men in personality, concrete policy preferences, degree of utopianism, amount of power, and the domestic and international context of their policy initiatives. Such emphasis will tend to control, if only in a limited way, for the impact of personality on policy choices.

One cannot, however, uncritically assume that past patterns will recur, and mechanistically project the past into the future. Indeed, there are new factors in Soviet politics and policy and in the international context in the 1980's that could alter those patterns. Some could affect the timing of change, and others, the content of change. Obviously, the future holds many possibilities. Thus, the article will assess the new factors at work and then the implications for the post-Brezhnev period. On balance, I will argue, factors related to internal Soviet politics are not likely to eliminate an intra-elite reformist impulse that has persisted through a quarter century of the post-Stalin era. If that impulse does not survive, the cause will probably lie in significant new factors in international politics.

Patterns of Political Succession

In turning first to previous successions, it is essential to keep in mind at the outset several general aspects of political succession in the USSR.

First, political succession in the Soviet Union has been a prolonged process. After the death of Stalin in March 1953, the political succession lasted through

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[1] George W. Breslauer, "Images of the Future and Lessons of the Past," in Robert Wesson, Ed., *The Soviet Union: Looking to the 1980's*, Millwood, NY, Kraus International Publications, 1980.

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December 1959, when the Central Committee approved Khrushchev's demand for a one-third cut in Soviet ground forces, an act that in turn capped Khrushchev's efforts to flesh out the foreign policy implications of the comprehensive program he had presented at the 21st Party Congress earlier that year. Similarly, after the ouster of Khrushchev in October 1964, the political succession lasted through November 1971, when a Central Committee Plenum endorsed Brezhnev's foreign policy measures of that year, an endorsement that in turn capped Brezhnev's efforts to flesh out the foreign policy implications of the comprehensive program he had presented at the 24th Party Congress earlier that year. In both cases, the process of political succession lasted approximately seven years.

Second, although precise turning points within these long periods are difficult to pin down, it is nonetheless possible to discern two stages in each succession. The first stage lasted roughly four years—from March 1953 to early 1957 for Khrushchev and from October 1964 to late 1968 for Brezhnev. In each instance, it was characterized by rival programs for significant change in policy and structure, by zigzags in policy, and by the polarization of positions as policy disputes fed into the power struggle and as the major protagonists seized on opportunities to portray their rivals in an unfavorable light. During this stage, the party leader maneuvered against his rivals in the leadership and began his gradual rise—but did not yet achieve complete ascendancy. The second stage lasted nearly three years—from early or mid-1957 to December 1959 for Khrushchev and from late 1968 or early 1969 to November 1971 for Brezhnev. In each instance, it was characterized by the ascendancy of the party leader,[2] by the forging and presentation of a comprehensive program for structural reform and budgetary redistribution at home, and by Soviet initiatives to improve the prospects for US-Soviet collaboration abroad.

Finally, the patterns of succession attest to the continuing importance of what might be termed the "post-Stalin consensus." Both within and between the

[2] To be sure, Khrushchev rose to a position of greater primacy than Brezhnev, but the trend within each administration was in the same direction. Moreover, some argue that Khrushchev had more power in 1955 than in 1957–58. This contention, which flows from the "conflict model" first elaborated by Carl Linden (*Khrushchev and the Soviet Leadership, 1957–1964*, Baltimore, MD, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1966), is based upon a misreading of Khrushchev's policy preferences during the period 1957–59 and therefore upon the erroneous conclusion that he lost on many issues during that period. For a reexamination of the evidence, see George W. Breslauer, "Patterns of Leadership in the Soviet Union Since Stalin," unpublished book manuscript.

Leaders in Stage 1 of the Stalin succession: at left, G.M. Malenkov, and at right, N.S. Khrushchev.

—Edo Koenig/Black Star.

Khrushchev and Brezhnev administrations, there has been a relatively broad agreement among the Soviet political elite that "post-Stalinism" requires continuing attention to consumer satisfaction and welfare, relaxation of international tensions through US-Soviet collaboration to avoid nuclear confrontation, and the simultaneous expansion of the influence of the Soviet Union as a competitive global power. Some members of the political elite have embraced these goals as ends in themselves, and others have viewed them as little more than regrettable necessities. Nevertheless, since the death of Stalin, most members of the Soviet leadership have not disagreed over *whether* to pursue these ends. Rather, both within and between administrations, they have differed over the strategies for attaining these goals and over the costs to be incurred in seeking them (potentially including budgetary restrictions on the military/heavy-industry complex, sac-

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rifice of the values of autarky and foreign policy militance as the guarantors of national security, and inroads on the primacy of bureaucratic centralism and party interventionism as means of stimulating initiative in a planned economy).[3] In such a general context, "significant change" in policies would involve the advancement of programs that explicitly challenge traditional priorities and values for the sake of improving economic efficiency, raising consumer satisfaction, building the global influence of the Soviet Union, and achieving détente with the United States.[4]

Such, in general outline, are the patterns of both the Stalin and Khrushchev successions. The particular character of each stage will now be set forth in greater detail.

Stage 1

A common feature of Stage 1 of both political successions was the rapid emergence of rival policy programs. Both the First Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers (Khrushchev and G.M. Malenkov in the first succession, and Brezhnev and A.N. Kosygin in the second) sponsored programs based upon competing approaches to problem-solving. While all four leaders offered programs that fell within the post-Stalin consensus, they differed most significantly over the costs to traditional values they were willing to bear for the sake of their programs.

Thus, in the domestic realm, Malenkov advocated a program for expanded investment in light industry, conversion of selected heavy-industry and defense plants to the production of consumer goods, long-term and heavy investment in the intensive development of agriculture, deep cuts in the defense budget to help pay for these programs, and restraints on party activism in order to improve administrative efficiency. In the sphere of foreign policy, he emphasized collaboration with the United States to reduce international tensions and thereby to make cuts in the defense budget more feasible. Khrushchev, in contrast, developed a program that was far less redistributive of budgetary priorities than Malenkov's, less challenging to traditional military and heavy-industry interests and values, and less accommodating to US sensibilities. Accordingly, in the domestic realm, he proposed a low-cost, short-term approach to solving the agricultural problem (the Virgin Lands Program), an expensive program for modernization and expansion of the defense forces (with particular emphasis on nuclear missiles), and increased party activism and interventionism as a means of stimulating administrative initiative. In the sphere of foreign policy he sought to expand competitive activism vis-à-vis Western interests in the Third World and (to prove that such activisim was not incompatible with the simultaneous search for collaborative arrangements with the West) to reduce the threat of confrontation, war, and an unlimited arms race with the United States.[5]

The differences between Brezhnev and Kosygin after Khrushchev's ouster were neither as large nor as stark as those between Khrushchev and Malenkov, but in certain respects they were analogous. Like Malenkov, Kosygin championed the cause of light industry in the battle for investments and advanced a program for administrative reform that, for the sake of economic efficiency, challenged the principle of party interventionism. In the realm of foreign policy, he endorsed the post-1965 rise in the defense budget, but his inclination was more to define the rise as a regrettable necessity and to insist on greater production of consumer goods in defense and heavy-industry enterprises.[6] In contrast, Brezhnev, like Khrushchev in the mid-1950's, identified himself with the agricultural sector (at the expense of light industry) and with a costly program for expansion and modernization of the armed forces. Brezhnev's lyric endorsement of patriotic themes and his strong and frequent repetition of the need for increases in the defense budget suggest that he was considerably less ambivalent than Kosygin on the issue and was determined (as Khrushchev had been) to "ride" the issue for personal political gain.[7] Moreover, Brezhnev placed much greater emphasis than Kosygin on party activism and interventionism in

[3] Breslauer, "Patterns of Leadership," Chaps. 2-4, 7-9. V.M. Molotov, however, was not a party to this consensus.

[4] Throughout this article, I will refer to such programs as "reformism" or "moderate reformism." My use of the term "reformism," it should be noted, differs from the usage in Stephen F. Cohen, "The Friends and Foes of Change: Reformism and Conservatism in the Soviet Union," *Slavic Review* (Urbana, IL), June 1979, where "reformism" refers to transformations in the political authority relationship between party officials and the masses.

[5] On Khrushchev's and Malenkov's foreign policy differences, see Herbert S. Dinerstein, *War and the Soviet Union*, New York, NY, Praeger, 1959; and C. Grant Pendill, Jr., " 'Bipartisanship' in Soviet Foreign Policy-Making," in Erik P. Hoffmann and Frederick J. Fleron, Jr., Eds., *The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy*. London, Butterworth, 1971.

[6] On Kosygin's insistence in this respect, see Robert Ehlers, Ed., *Current Soviet Policies V: The Documentary Record of the 23rd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Columbus, OH, American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, 1973, p. 100; contrast Brezhnev's more tepid formulation in ibid., p. 21.

[7] See, for example, Leonid Brezhnev, *Leninskim kursom* (On a Leninist Course), Moscow, Politizdat, 1970-79, Vol. 1, pp. 152-53, 156-57, 160, 161, 165, 224-25, 249; see also *Pravda* (Moscow), July 11, 1965.

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his approach to public administration. Thus, Kosygin paralleled Malenkov in his greater willingness to challenge traditional values for the sake of administrative efficiency and consumer satisfaction, and Brezhnev paralleled Khrushchev in his more assertive defense of traditional values.

During the first years of Stage 1, however, the direct confrontation between the top leaders was to some extent kept in bounds by the restraints of collective leadership, by a division of labor among members of the Politburo (from 1952 to 1966, the Presidium), and by restriction of the policy-defining role of the party leader to a limited number of issue-areas. In the period 1953–55, for instance, Khrushchev's speeches dealt almost exclusively with issues of agriculture, party organization, defense, and foreign policy. Matters of culture, light industry, and industrial administration were primarily left to other members of the leadership. Similarly, during the first years of his administration, Brezhnev focused his attention largely on issues of agriculture, party organization, and defense as well as on symbolic-patriotic issues. Only as Stage 1 progressed did both Khrushchev and Brezhnev begin to speak more frequently on questions of culture and industrial administration. But even then, neither one set forth his own comprehensive, integrated program for progress in all realms.[8]

A second common feature of Stage 1 in both successions was the occurrence of policy zigzags and inconsistencies, which stemmed primarily from the division of labor within the leadership, rival policy approaches, unavoidable interdependences among sectors, and the struggle for power. Thus, in 1953–54, Malenkov's emphasis on light industry and consumer goods held sway, the defense budget was cut significantly, and Soviet policy toward the United States and Third World was restrained and noncompellent.[9] Increased activism toward neutral countries and collaborative emphases vis-à-vis the United States were on the policy agenda, but neither such activism nor such emphases were especially bold, far-reaching, or reflective of major Soviet concessions. In 1955, however, Khrushchev saw to the reexpansion of the defense budget, the cutting of funds for light industry, and a more compellent foreign policy that intensified *both* competitive activism and collaboration with the United States—for example, the Czechoslovakian-Egyptian arms deal, expanded Soviet political and economic ties with neutral Asian states, rapprochement with Yugoslavia, the Geneva summit, the Austrian State Treaty, and substantive Soviet concessions on arms control.

Khrushchev's "secret speech" denouncing Stalin, delivered at the 20th Party Congress in February 1956, represented an effort to seize the initiative from his political rivals, to expand his policy-defining role still further,[10] and to break through traditional constraints on what he saw as domestic and foreign policy progress. But the results of the speech were not what Khrushchev had anticipated, and by the end of 1956, his rivals made a short-lived effort to revise the Sixth Five-Year Plan and to institute a technocratic reform of industrial administration that would restrain party interventionism. Within a few months, Khrushchev launched a counteroffensive, one that entailed scrapping the current five-year plan, abolishing most central ministries, establishing regional economic councils *(sovnarkhozy),* and expanding party interventionism throughout the economy. With this counteroffensive began Stage 2 of the political succession.

Policy zigzags during Stage 1 of the post-Khrushchev succession were neither as frequent nor as far-reaching as those of the period 1953–57, perhaps because the Soviet political elite were less polarized after Khrushchev than they had been after Stalin. Nonetheless, the zigzags were real. The defense budget was initially cut in December 1964 but was raised again, sharply, in December 1965. Agricultural investment increased strikingly in the period 1965–67, but at the September 1967 Central Committee Plenum, decisions were reached to reduce agricultural investment by 25 percent and to raise welfare benefits, the defense budget, and investment in light industry. However, the decisions were soon overturned, for in 1968, Brezhnev won a struggle over in-

[8] Khrushchev's dramatic initiatives at the 20th Party Congress, in February 1956, do not contradict this generalization. The thrust of "destalinization" at the time was negative (though far-reaching), in that it emphasized destroying what was wrong with the previous political order rather than uniting the nation for the attainment of positive new goals in all realms. Similarly, Brezhnev's speech at the 23rd Party Congress, in 1966, reiterated the premises of the agricultural and industrial reforms introduced in 1965; however, beyond this, it was largely negative in emphasizing the rejection of Khrushchev's leadership style. A comprehensive, positive program that defined the character of new relationships in all realms would have to await the 24th Party Congress, in 1971.

[9] The concept of "compellence" has been suggested by Steven Walt, a graduate student in the Department of Political Science, University of California at Berkeley. A compellent approach forces solutions to critical issues but does not necessarily specify any particular means of doing so. Thus, it may be based on significant concessions or on militant confrontation.

[10] The concept of "role expansion" was introduced into the literature on Soviet elite politics by Grey Hodnett, "Succession Contingencies in the Soviet Union," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), March-April 1975.

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N.S. Khrushchev, former Soviet Communist Party First Secretary, addresses collective farmers in the village of Shishinskoye in the Kustanay Oblast of Kazakhstan, part of the Virgin Lands.

—Sovfoto.

vestment priorities and saw to the reexpansion of investment in agriculture at the expense of investment in light industry. Similarly, in the realm of administrative reform, the early policy of the Brezhnev regime (1964–66) pointed in the direction of meaningful restraints on party interventionism and a tentative commitment to move toward marketization. But the forces that favored party intervention were simultaneously regrouping, and, in 1967–68, they found the climate favorable for more frequent and more decisive interventions.

Shifts in foreign policy were fewer than in domestic policy, and fewer than they had been during Stage 1 of the post-Stalin succession. These were "years of consolidation,"[11] during which the emphasis was on building up conventional and strategic military capability and on expanding Soviet economic and military ties and presence in the Third World as opportunities presented themselves. The Soviet posture toward both the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the United States was neither confrontational nor collaborative—in US-Soviet relations, the exceptions involved secondary issues, such as cultural exchanges or the demilitarization of outer space, or urgent issues on which Soviet action was consistent with the Soviet image of world order and did not constrain the Soviet Union's arms buildup (e.g., nuclear nonproliferation). Although ongoing debates were taking place within the Soviet leadership over the desired shape and extent of the military buildup, over tactics in the Third World, and over the extent to which risk-taking should be curbed to avoid confrontations with the United States,[12] there was relatively little evidence of major differences over basic foreign policy orientation. A rather broad consensus had emerged within the Soviet political elite that the Soviet Union should have the will

[11] Robin Edmonds, *Soviet Foreign Policy, 1962–1973; The Paradox of Superpower*, London, Oxford University Press, 1975, Part 2.

[12] On these debates, see Thomas Wolfe, *Soviet Power in Europe, 1945–1970*, Baltimore, MD, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970; Franklyn Griffiths, "Images, Politics, and Learning in Soviet Behavior Toward the United States," unpublished PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 1972.

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and the capability to be a competitive global power.[13] By mid-1966, a rather broad consensus had also developed on the threatening nature of the international situation, a perception that grew out of the Americanization of the Vietnam war, US intervention in the Dominican Republic, the Cultural Revolution in the PRC, and a right-wing reaction throughout the Third World. And a broad range of figures within the political elite agreed that such circumstances rendered undesirable either highly competitive activism in the Third World or détente with the United States.

Nonetheless, there were important similarities in the trend of foreign policy in Stage 1 of both successions. First, from 1965 to early 1968, Soviet policy toward the United States was noncompellent, much as it had been from March 1953 through the spring of 1955. Second, during the spring of 1968, clear signs appeared that Soviet leaders were ready to emerge from their consolidative reaction and to make substantive concessions that would facilitate arms control talks—which is precisely the kind of shift in Soviet policy that occurred in the spring and summer of 1955.[14] (Whether the common shift took place because of common changes in the Soviet perception of the international situation or because of changes in internal politics resulting from the course of the political succession is a separate question to be discussed below.)

A third common feature of Stage 1 of both successions was the polarization of positions among the principal rivals for power. The power struggle not only fostered policy inconsistencies, as noted above, but also fed into policy debates, leading the party leader to engage in polemics with his main rivals, during which he sought deliberately to exaggerate the level of polarization over the issues.

During Stage 1 of the post-Stalin succession, Khrushchev and Malenkov polemicized over a wide range of issues in March and April 1954.[15] A running debate ensued during the remaining months of 1954

Early in the Khrushchev succession, leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union pay last respects to their colleague, F.R. Kozlov: in the front center, L.I. Brezhnev; at the far right, A.N. Kosygin; between them, N.V. Podgornyy; and to Brezhnev's right, A.I. Mikoyan.

—Sovfoto.

and culminated in Malenkov's demotion after the January 1955 Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, at which Khrushchev accused "certain economists" (read Malenkov) of a "right-wing deviation" and presented himself as the leader best able to feed the people without undermining the nation's defense.[16] Thereafter, Khrushchev shifted his foreign policy position to support expanded collaboration with the United States and rapprochement with Yugoslavia, a shift that resulted in polemics with Molotov. In his speech at the 20th Party Congress, Khrushchev reiterated his critiques of the Malenkov and Molotov "deviations" and tried to project himself as the leader best able to implement the post-Stalin consensus without submitting to the forces of extremism of either the right or the left.[17]

Although the differences between the positions advocated by Brezhnev and Kosygin were neither as deep nor as broad as those that had divided Soviet

[13] The existence of such a broad consensus after Khrushchev is suggested by the early reversal after October 1964 of both Khrushchev's reduction of the Soviet commitment to North Vietnam and his readiness to make major concessions to solve the German problem in spite of objections by the German Democratic Republic. It is further indicated by Brezhnev's downgrading, in his November 1964 speech on the anniversary of the 1917 October Revolution, of the status of the concept of peaceful coexistence. On the latter point, see Griffiths, op. cit., p. 430. All this predated the US bombing of North Vietnam in February 1965 and the Americanization of the Vietnam War.

[14] On Soviet foreign policy shifts during Stage 1 of each succession, see the relevant sections of Dinerstein, op, cit.; Wolfe, op, cit.; Griffiths, op. cit.; and Edmonds, op. cit.

[15] See *Pravda*, Mar. 7, Mar. 13, and Apr. 27, 1954. For an analysis of the polemic, see Breslauer, "Patterns of Leadership," Chap. 2.

[16] See *Pravda*, Feb. 3, 1955.

[17] See Khrushchev's speech at the 20th Party Congress, as translated in Leo Gruliow, Ed., *Current Soviet Policies II: The Documentary Record of the 20th Communist Party Congress and Its Aftermath*, New York, NY, Praeger, 1957, pp. 60–61.

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leaders after Stalin, they were analogous (especially with regard to domestic policy). They were in evidence in speeches delivered during the period 1965–67, and they too resulted in a multi-issue polemic toward the end of Stage 1. Thus, from November 1967 to March 1968, the differences between Brezhnev and Kosygin came to a head, as they were deliberately exaggerated.[18] Kosygin defended his distinctive approaches to investment priorities, economic reform, and foreign trade. Brezhnev adopted a more conservative and combative posture than he had struck in earlier years, accusing Kosygin of neglecting the people's need for agricultural products, of threatening the leading role of the party in public administration, and of underestimating the Soviet system's capacity to overtake the United States technologically through party-mobilizational instruments. In other words, Brezhnev attempted to pin the extremist label on his rival and to project himself as the leader best suited to protect traditional political values during a period of policy innovation geared toward implementing the post-Stalin consensus on behalf of peace, prosperity, and expanded Soviet global influence.

With the end of Stage 1 of both successions, however, the features that had marked it faded from view. This development reflected the party leader's ascendancy, the predominant feature of Stage 2 of the political succession.

Stage 2

During Stage 2, the party leader seized the initiative from his rival or rivals, decisively expanded his policy-defining role into all realms, allowed or encouraged a sharp expansion of his personality cult, and altered the composition of the Politburo to increase his own political leverage. Under Khrushchev, the struggle to consolidate ascendancy was a prominent feature of the years 1957–58. During these years, Khrushchev purged the "anti-party group" from the leadership, "packed" the Presidium with representatives of the party apparatus, purged Marshals G.K. Zhukov and N.A. Bulganin from the leadership, combined in his own person the positions of Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and First Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, and initiated the practice of expanded (i.e., packed) plenary sessions of the Central Committee. Brezhnev never went this far, but in 1969 and 1970 (the corresponding years of Stage 2), he too sought to consolidate a position of primacy. He took the lead in defining policy in realms (industrial administration, in particular) to which his earlier speeches had devoted less attention. He took a personal initiative in furthering rapprochement with West Germany. He seized the initiative on economic reform with a blistering attack on the ministries at the December 1969 Plenum of the Central Committee. In 1969–70, he sharply expanded his visibility as leader of the Politburo. For example, in June 1970, he, rather than Kosygin, delivered the main speech to the USSR Council of Ministers, and later in the year, he alone signed the "Directives" of the Ninth Five-Year Plan. In 1970, too, Brezhnev for the first time invoked the threat of the mass mood against opposing currents within the political elite in order to advance his agricultural program—a threat that Khrushchev had employed frequently in the 1950's but that Brezhnev had dropped during his first years in power because of its populist overtones.[19]

With respect to policy changes during Stage 2, the opportunistic positions adopted by the party leader in polemics with his rivals toward the end of Stage 1 are a poor guide to the positions he adopted when forging a comprehensive program to be presented at the next party congress. In some issue-areas, the programs advanced by the party leader at the 21st and 24th party congresses reflected his earlier priorities. In others, however, they were compromise, unity platforms, based on a commitment to reformism in domestic and foreign policy.[20]

In domestic policy, there was clearly an element of continuity between each party leader's positions in Stages 1 and 2. Khrushchev's program for the "full-scale construction of communism" bore his distinctive stamp. It proposed social, administrative, and political transformations to release popular initiative and thereby achieve consumer abundance without a diversion of funds from defense and without preventing a sharp increase in the funding of heavy industry and Siberian development. Brezhnev's domestic program of 1971 likewise reflected positions he had defended during Stage 1. It placed heavy emphasis on sharply

[18] See *Pravda*, Nov. 4, 1967, and Mar. 30, 1968; and *Sovetskaya Belorussiya* (Minsk), Feb. 15, 1968. For an analysis of the polemic, see Breslauer, "Patterns of Leadership," Chaps. 7–9.

[19] For Brezhnev's resurrection of allusions to the mass mood, see *Pravda*, Apr. 23 and June 13, 1970.

[20] Convenient translations of Khrushchev's and Brezhnev's programs of 1959 and 1971 may be found in Leo Gruliow, Ed., *Current Soviet Policies III: The Documentary Record of the Extraordinary 21st Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, New York, NY, Columbia University Press, 1960; and in Robert Ehlers, Ed., *Current Soviet Policies VI: The Documentary Record of the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Columbus, OH, American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, 1973.

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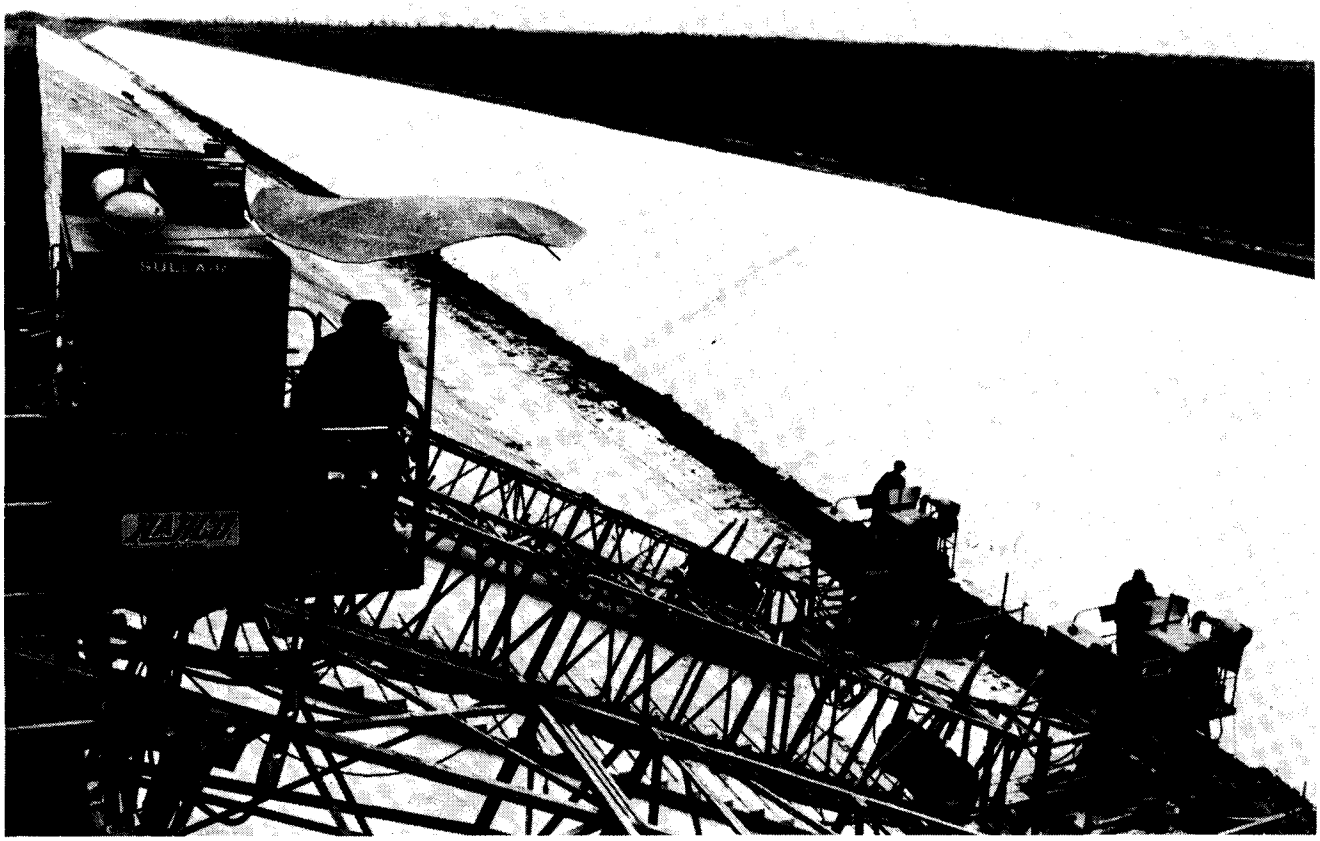

American machinery is used to pave the bed for a lateral canal on the Kakhovka irrigation canal near Novotroitsk in Kherson Oblast in December 1976.

—TASS from Sovfoto.

expanded investment in the rural sector and in industries that service agriculture. Similarly, Brezhnev's position on administrative reform amounted to a rejection of the hopes of those who had earlier looked forward to marketization of the economy.

But both comprehensive programs for domestic progress held major surprises as well. They toned down or retreated from the opportunistic, traditionalist positions adopted by the party leader during earlier polemics with rivals. Indeed, they selectively reincorporated elements of programs advanced by the party leader's outflanked or defeated rivals. Thus, Khrushchev's program called for expanded investment in light industry and in a chemicals industry that would, among other things, produce synthetic fiber for textiles. It postponed Soviet investment in full-scale production of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM's) until a second generation of such missiles had been developed. It promised to increase administrative efficiency without a continuing purge of the regional elite. Similarly, Brezhnev's program was a surprise for those who had observed his traditionalist positions of Stage 1. At the 24th Party Congress, Brezhnev proposed to simultaneously hold down expenditures on defense and Siberian development, struggle against ministerial and regional party resistance to production associations established according to criteria of economic efficiency (even if such associations cut across traditional political-jurisdictional lines), expand sharply the production of consumer goods in heavy-industry and defense enterprises, increase investment in light industry, and de-emphasize welfare-oriented values for the sake of increasing labor productivity through increased differentiation of material reward and through the release of redundant labor. Thus, both Khrushchev's and Brezhnev's comprehensive programs for domestic progress were reformist, Khrushchev's much more so than Brezhnev's.[21]

In foreign policy, both Khrushchev's and Brezhnev's programs and behavior during 1959 and 1971 con-

[21] For an analysis that interprets Brezhnev's reformist program as even more reformist than I do, see Alexander Yanov, *Detente After Brezhnev*, Berkeley, CA, Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1977.

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verged in the direction of collaborative competition.[22] At the 21st Party Congress, Khrushchev lauded the imminent transformation of the international order to the advantage of socialism and escalated his use of strategic bluff in an attempt to deter a confrontational US response to Soviet activism.[23] In the same speech, however, he offered a "grand design" for increased US-Soviet collaboration that would, he hoped, result in arms control agreements, the denuclearization of West Germany and the PRC, and measures to prevent US-Soviet confrontation.[24] Moreover, after the party congress, Khrushchev took the personal initiative to make rapid progress on military, political, and economic détente with the United States. He abrogated the nuclear-sharing agreement with the PRC and journeyed to the United States, where he partook of the "spirit of Camp David," sought expanded trade with the United States, and agreed to a Big Four summit meeting the following spring. And at the December 1959 Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, Khrushchev attempted to further the cause of "peace and prosperity" through collaborative competition by gaining approval of a plan to reduce the size of the Soviet ground forces by one third.

Brezhnev's behavior during 1971 followed much the same pattern. At the 24th Party Congress, he retreated from the militant, uncompromising rhetoric of the previous party congress but reaffirmed, in no uncertain terms, the Soviet commitment to competitive activism in the Third World. At the same time, however, he outlined a "peace program" that indicated new Soviet urgency about furthering US-Soviet collaboration on outstanding issues of arms control, European affairs, and avoidance of confrontation.[25] After the party congress, Brezhnev, like Khrushchev earlier, took the initiative to flesh out the implications of this program. He signaled US decision-makers that he was now the leading Soviet spokesman on foreign affairs. This led, in turn, to significant Soviet concessions at the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) during April–May 1971[26] and to a Soviet sense of urgency during the spring of 1971 about finalizing ongoing negotiations with the United States and West Germany. In August 1971, the Soviet leadership invited US President Richard Nixon to a summit meeting in Moscow the following spring. And in November 1971, Brezhnev got the Central Committee Plenum formally to endorse his "peace program" (something it had not done after the 24th Party Congress) and to affirm his now-expanded linkage between US-Soviet collaboration (on arms control and trade) and domestic economic progress.[27]

Thus, somewhat belying the exaggerated positions they had adopted in earlier years, both Khrushchev and Brezhnev, at about the same points in the political succession process, returned to the post-Stalin tasks at hand: to offer a synthesis of conflicting tendencies for the sake of simultaneously increasing consumer satisfaction, promoting US-Soviet détente, and expanding Soviet influence in the Third World. Moreover, both advanced programs that recognized the impossibility of achieving these ends without significant acts of reformist leadership that would, at a minimum, challenge major political interests and traditional values within the Soviet Union. Finally, both linked economic and military détente abroad to structural and budgetary reforms at home, rather than viewing one as a substitute for the other.

But both Khrushchev and Brezhnev overreached themselves. In each instance, the comprehensive, ambitious program for progress at home and abroad was undermined within 18 months of its presentation. In Khrushchev's case, dust-bowl conditions in the Virgin Lands, coupled with the U-2 affair and the collapse of the Paris summit, knocked the props out from under his economic program and "grand design." In

[22] In a recent article, Stanley Hoffmann makes a useful contribution to the language of discourse about US-Soviet relations by suggesting that the choice is not between "cooperation" and "competition," but rather between "cooperative competition" and "confrontational competition." See "Reflections on the Present Danger," *The New York Review of Books* (New York, NY), Mar. 8, 1980. I prefer the term "collaboration" to "cooperation," but I otherwise agree completely that US-Soviet competition is a constant and that the choice is (and has long been) between one type of competition and another type. Moreover, "collaborative competition" more accurately describes the character of both Khrushchev's and Brezhnev's collaborative offerings of 1959 and 1971.

[23] See Arnold Horelick and Myron Rush, *Strategic Power and Soviet Foreign Policy*, Chicago, IL, University of Chicago Press, 1966, pp. 53 f; and William Zimmerman, *Soviet Perspectives on International Relations, 1956–1967*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1969.

[24] On Khrushchev's "grand design," see Adam B. Ulam, *Expansion and Coexistence: Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917–1973*, 2nd ed., New York, NY, Praeger, 1974, p. 621.

[25] On Soviet militant perspectives at the 23rd Party Congress, see Marshall Shulman, "Recent Soviet Foreign Policy: Some Patterns in Retrospect," *Journal of International Affairs* (New York, NY), Vol. 22, No. 1, 1968. For an analysis of Brezhnev's foreign policy perspectives at the 24th Party Congress and a comparison of the two party congresses, see Peter M.E. Volten, *The Soviet 'Peace Program' and Its Implementation Towards the West*, Amsterdam, Foundation for the Promotion of East-West Contacts, Free University, 1977.

[26] These concessions predated the secret trip to Beijing by Henry Kissinger, national security adviser to the US president, after which more concessions were forthcoming. See Henry Kissinger, *White House Years*, Boston, MA, Little, Brown and Co., 1979, pp. 817–31, 835–38.

[27] See Volten, op. cit., pp. 61–66. December 1971 was a turning point in the specialist literature on détente, as is documented in William B. Husband, "Soviet Perceptions of U.S. 'Positions-of-Strength' Diplomacy in the 1970's," *World Politics* (Princeton, NJ), July 1979, p. 507.

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Brezhnev's case, the worst winterkill and drought in 50 years struck Soviet grain-producing regions in 1972, destroying the viability of Brezhnev's economic program. But no such misfortune intervened in the foreign policy realm, and Brezhnev was able to link his new domestic program to the hoped-for fruits of détente.

(Khrushchev and Brezhnev also differed in their reactions to the frustration of their domestic programs—Khrushchev going on the counteroffensive against the most powerful political forces in the regime, and Brezhnev from 1973 accommodating to them. But that is another story, which no longer pertains to political succession.[28])

Explaining the Patterns

In comparing the two political successions since Stalin, then, several common features stand out. First, in both cases the political succession was a two-stage process, leading ultimately to the ascendancy of the party leader. Second, in the short run (i.e., during Stage 1), rival programs were advanced, one of which fundamentally challenged traditional values by calling for cuts in the defense budget, for structural change at home, or for both. The party leader undercut those challenges by portraying his rivals as extremists and by supporting policies that fell within the post-Stalin consensus but that did relatively little damage to the primacy of political mobilizational approaches to public administration. At the same time, he undertook a defense buildup. Third, in the long run (i.e., during Stage 2), the party leader forged a comprehensive program in domestic and foreign policy, in so doing striking a compromise among conflicting tendencies, advocating significant changes in economic policy and administrative structure, and proposing significant Soviet initiatives for the sake of US-Soviet collaboration in order to regularize the arms race, reduce con-

[28] For an analysis and comparison of how Khrushchev and Brezhnev responded to the frustration of their programs, see Breslauer, "Patterns of Leadership," Chaps. 6 and 11.

Crowds at a Moscow food store.

—Alain Nogues/SYGMA.

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frontations, outflank the PRC in international affairs, and increase access to Western trade and credits.[29]

Are the patterns of past successions relevant to the coming Brezhnev succession? If the causes that gave rise to these patterns are still operative, the same pattern may well be repeated. If the causes are no longer operative, new patterns will probably emerge. What causal factors, then, explain these patterns?

The *fact* of a two-stage succession process leading to the ascendancy of the party leader and his presentation of a comprehensive program (of any kind) soon thereafter can probably be explained by several mutually reinforcing factors: (1) the party leader's strategic placement with respect to the allocation of patronage and his identification with the institution that provides the guiding political mythology of the system; (2) the time required to manipulate issues, discredit rivals, and accumulate patronage; (3) the flexible yet constraining cycles and deadlines associated with the five-year plans and party congresses; (4) pressures on the party leader from within the broad political elite to "deliver" once he discredits rival programs and pushes to the fore.[30] But the interaction of these factors does not account for the *content* of the programs offered by the party leader during Stages 1 and 2. And how are we to explain the apparent paradox that the party leader first rides to victory in part by discrediting programs that raise too direct a challenge to traditional values, and then proposes to challenge those values himself?

The *short-term* victory of political mobilizational approaches at home and "hard-line" approaches to foreign and defense policy can partially be accounted for by opportunistic mobilization of dominant interests in the military/heavy-industry complex, the central and regional party apparatus, and the ministerial bureaucracy, buttressed by an ideological tradition (in both the military and civilian sectors) that sees military power as security against what is perceived to be a hostile international environment, that equates global activism with progress, and that extols central planning and party activism as ends in themselves. Yet such opportunism explains neither the short-term appearance of programs for far-reaching reform nor the reincorporation of parts of those programs in the behavior of the party leader during Stage 2. To explain these patterns, the reformist impulse itself must be scrutinized.

Alexander Yanov argues that the persistence of a reformist impulse in Soviet politics results from two sets of political interests: a managerial "lobby" and an "aristocratizing elite."[31] The former, Yanov claims, consists of the "new Soviet managers," who seek access to scarce supplies now hoarded by military interests and who yearn for restraints on ministerial and party intervention and for the creation of a form of market socialism. The "aristocratizing elite," according to Yanov, consists of those central officials from all sectors whose overriding concern is to perpetuate their privileges through consumerism and peace.

These political interests may well exist, but it seems unlikely that they alone have been large enough or strong enough to perpetuate the reformist impulse. The realm of political interests supporting reformism, it appears to me, is somewhat broader, and the realm of political ideology extends the net of support still further.[32] I would therefore hypothesize that several additional factors help explain Khrushchev's and Brezhnev's (as well as Malenkov's and Kosygin's) behavior. First, there has been a far-reaching consensus[33] among the Soviet political elite that neither a return to Stalinism (in domestic and foreign policy) nor a breakthrough toward Yugoslav levels of market socialism, international openness, and dependence on the outside world is necessary, desirable, or feasible.[34] Second, there has been a far-reaching consen-

[29] These patterns support the argument advanced 15 years ago by John Armstrong in "The Domestic Roots of Soviet Foreign Policy," *Journal of International Affairs*, January 1965, p. 57: "*in the short run* contestants for leadership in the Soviet Union will manipulate policy issues to strengthen their domestic power positions. This manipulation (which sometimes involves at least marginal sacrifice of Soviet interests) will, however, last only as long as the power struggle is in doubt . . . . In the *longer run*, any victorious contestant tends to take the position which is consonant with a rational calculation of Soviet interests." (Emphasis in original.) Armstrong was writing only of foreign policy, but his statement, with due qualification, could apply as well to domestic policy. If by "rational calculation of Soviet interests" we mean a serious effort to challenge traditional values and interests in order to make significant progress toward meeting the commitments of the post-Stalin era both at home and abroad, the statement is an accurate characterization of the common features of Khrushchev's behavior in 1959 and Brezhnev's behavior in 1971.

[30] By the Soviet "political elite," I mean candidate and full members of the Central Committee, and those with regular access to, or influence on, these members. Matters of timing could also be studied in broader comparative perspective, even within Soviet history. Thus, six and a half to seven and a half years passed between Lenin's incapacitation and Stalin's pushing to the fore with a comprehensive program of his own.

[31] Yanov, *Detente After Brezhnev*, passim.

[32] On the distinction between the realm of interests and the realm of ideology, see Franz Schurmann, *The Logic of World Power*, New York, NY, Pantheon Books, 1974.

[33] By "far-reaching consensus," I mean a degree of agreement that is substantially less than unanimously held, but substantially more than a narrow majority.

[34] For the argument that the emergence of a "revolutionary consciousness" requires that one perceive revolutionary change to be necessary, desirable, and feasible, see H. Wolpe, "Some Problems Concerning Revolutionary Consciousness," in Ralph Miliband and John Saville, Eds., *The Socialist Register 1970*, London, The Merlin Press, 1970.

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sus among the Soviet political elite that an unrestrained arms race is a threat to domestic economic goals (and potentially to domestic stability), that US technological prowess is potentially awesome and needs to be checked, that the threat of nuclear war requires collaborative restraints on US-Soviet competition, and that the rise of the PRC as a rival power makes the need for US-Soviet collaboration all the more urgent. Third, the ideological tradition of the USSR calls for unabating progress toward a more affluent society. Fourth, there has been a diffuse fear among the Soviet political elite that shocks to the standard of living may have adverse effects on political stability, notably among Russian workers and ethnic minorities and in Eastern Europe. Fifth, many regional party officials of both the Stalinist and post-Stalin generations have been infused with a "win orientation" that calls for continuous improvement in the structure and functioning of Soviet public administration and public mobilization.[35] Sixth, many Soviet officials who work in the military/heavy-industry complex have increasingly come to realize that improvements in the standard of living are a prerequisite for making labor incentives effective spurs to productivity. Finally. perennial budgetary strain has made Soviet leaders susceptible to appeals for administrative reforms that would substitute for budgetary redistribution.

All of these factors have been in evidence throughout most of the post-Stalin era, though in different forms, to different degrees, and with different concrete consequences. They created a structure of political interests and expectations supportive of both Khrushchev's and Brezhnev's reformist efforts, although those who had such interests and held such expectations were not willing at the time to go as far as Malenkov and Kosygin were portrayed as wanting to go, or as far as Khrushchev went after 1960.

Considerations for the Future

Will the causal factors just outlined continue to have the major impact on Soviet power and policy that they have had in the past? Or are new factors more important for Soviet politics today? To answer these questions, it is necessary to identify potentially relevant new factors and to specify their possible effect. Such factors would include:

1. A transitional leadership. It is not improbable that Brezhnev will be succeeded by a transitional leader or leaders from his own generation, who will be committed to maintaining the conservative policies Brezhnev has followed since 1973. This eventuality might turn the Brezhnev succession into a three-stage process. Moreover, to the extent that hard choices are postponed and pent-up demands for reform are not released, a transitional leadership could lead to the crystallization of a reformist program even in the first stage subsequent to the retirement or death of the transitional leader or leaders. Other things being equal, however, a transitional leadership per se is not likely to prevent the subsequent reappearance of the reformist impulse from within the Soviet political elite.

2. The exhaustion of alternatives. It is sometimes argued that both the economic and the political situations in the Soviet Union today are now different from what they were at the beginning of the previous successions. The dearth of slack in the Soviet economy will make it difficult to repeat the positive performances of 1953–57 and 1964–68, it is held, and the experience of the Khrushchev and Brezhnev administrations has alerted members of the Soviet political elite to the high political costs associated with structural reform of the economy.

One variant of this argument is that a broad consensus has been forged in favor of an indefinite perpetuation of the conservative approach of recent years. That is, the relatively inefficient, overcentralized system would be maintained, collaborative arrangements in foreign policy would be sought to gain Western assistance in developing Siberian resources, and Siberian mineral resources would be traded for Western consumer goods, agricultural products, and technologies to alleviate the impact of systemic inefficiencies on the Soviet consumer.

A second variant is that the frustration of both Khrushchev's and Brezhnev's reformist programs has increased elite polarization and mass discontent, creating constituencies within the political elite who argue that the only alternative to economic decline is marketization, or who view the only alternative as a return to some form of Stalinism.

There is no denying that there is currently not much slack in the Soviet economy. But I would quarrel with the above views of current perspectives within the Soviet political elite. Neither the central leadership itself nor the broader political elite is as united or as satisfied as the first variant of the "exhaustion of alternatives" argument would suggest. And neither the central leadership nor the broader political elite is as

[35] On the "win-orientation" infused in contemporary Soviet officials, see Kenneth Jowitt, "Inclusion and Mobilization in European Leninist Regimes," *World Politics*, October 1975.

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polarized, or as disenchanted with the prospects for *moderate* reformism, as the second variant would indicate.[36] Other things being equal, budgetary redistributions, structural-administrative (not political) reforms, and collaborative offerings are likely to take place in the 1980's. (The question of the "longer run" is, to be sure, an open one, but it is also a moot one. So is the question of whether the policy initiatives of the 1980's will work as intended.)

3. *Generational change.* In efforts to foresee the opinions of the Soviet political elite during the coming succession, the generational factor must be taken into account. As the Brezhnev administration is replaced by another, there will be a widespread turnover throughout the Soviet political and administrative elite, from the Politburo down through the central party and government apparatus to regional positions in the party and government. Many of those who will move into these posts will be significantly younger than current officeholders — indeed, of an entirely different generation.

What impact will this massive generational turnover have on the prospect for moderate reformism in Soviet policy? Relatively little work has been done to try to tap the political orientations of this new and younger generation, and no work exists that taps intergenerational differences over foreign policy. But work in progress, and results already reported, indicate considerable potential support for moderate reformism at home, though not for radical social or political transformation.[37] If there is anything distinctive about the orientations of the younger generation of party officials, it would appear that this generation possesses a higher incidence of self-confidence, a still more activist win-orientation, a greater impatience to get on with improving the functioning of the economy, and a fuller appreciation and greater tolerance of complexity. As they reflect on current rates of economic progress, many members of this political generation are likely to exclaim: "we can do better than that!" And as they reflect on the prospect of maintaining current levels of inefficiency while trading Siberian minerals for Western consumer goods, many, I suspect, would experience ideological dissonance: "after more than 60 years of Soviet power, we can do no better than to place ourselves on the short end of a semicolonial relationship with our capitalist competitors!" With respect to concrete policy preferences, one is likely to find among these officials significant support for a new type of *sovnarkhoz* movement (which would sharply increase regional authority for the sake of administrative efficiency); for reform of the foreign trade sector; for budgetary redistributions that cut into, or reduce the rate of growth of, the defense budget; for legalization of certain private consumer services, such as catering or repair services; for more widespread introduction of rationalizing but inegalitarian measures such as the Shchekino experiment in industry or the link *(zven'yevaya)* system in agriculture; and perhaps (if domestic policy reformism also reflects a foreign policy reformist orientation, as was the case in 1959 and 1971) for new strategies for combining global competition with the United States and economic, military, and political détente with the United States, Western Europe, and Japan. To be sure, programs consistent with such attitudes may not produce results—with unpredictable consequences for elite frustration with reformism. But the orientations ascendant among many future Soviet leaders point to the conclusion that another round of moderate reformism is more likely than a perpetuation of the status quo, a breakthrough into market socialism, or a return to Stalinism.

The massiveness of the coming turnover among Soviet decision-makers, coupled with the extent of the current economic slowdown and the lack of a clear successor to Brezhnev, will certainly complicate Soviet policymaking. This combination of factors may well reinforce the propensity for policy zigzags and opportunistic denunciation of rival programs during Stage 1 of the political succession. It may also contribute to a somewhat more freewheeling power struggle—more like that of the 1950's than that of the 1960's. But policy zigzags, mutual denunciation, and freewheeling power struggles would by no means be new in Soviet

[36] See George W. Breslauer, "The Twenty-Fifth Party Congress: Domestic Issues," in Alexander Dallin, Ed., *The Twenty-Fifth Congress of the CPSU: Assessment and Context*, Stanford, CA, Hoover Institution Press, 1977; Seweryn Bialer, *The Politics of Change in the Soviet Union*, New York, NY, Cambridge University Press, forthcoming, Part 2; Albert L. Salter, "Portrait of an Emerging Soviet Elite Generation," in Dimitri K. Simes and associates, *Soviet Succession: Leadership in Transition*, The Washington Papers, No. 59, Beverly Hills, CA, and London, Sage Publications, 1978. See also articles in the Soviet press by Krasnoyarsk Kraykom First Secretary P.S. Fedirko—for example, in *Partiynaya zhizn'* (Moscow), No. 14, 1977, pp. 43–48; *Ekonomicheskaya gazeta* (Moscow), No. 23, 1976, p. 5; *Pravda*, Oct. 31, 1978; and *Sovetskaya kul'tura* (Moscow), Aug. 30, 1977.

[37] See Bialer, op. cit., Part 2; M. Ellen Jones and Fred W. Grupp, "Searching for Policy Preferences Among the Soviet Elite: The Case of Ya. P. Ryabov," paper delivered at the 41st Military Operations Research Society Conference, National Defense University, Washington, DC, July 11–13, 1978; and Jerry Hough, "The Generation Gap and the Brezhnev Succession," *Problems of Communism*, July-August 1979. Peter Hauslohner and I are also engaged in an analysis of the domestic policy orientations of a sample of 23 obkom and kraykom first secretaries in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. The following discussion in the text is based on a synthesis of the above works.

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politics, and the volatility caused by this combination of factors would probably be kept in bounds by the leadership's collective interest in avoiding an open power struggle, by the fact that potential leaders are not advocates of radical political or social transformation, and by the fact that the level of elite polarization is not nearly as high today as it was in the 1950's.

4. A new international context. Another factor that could make the coming political succession different from previous ones is the altered international context. It has been argued that the Soviet attainment of strategic parity, the Soviet acquisition of a global conventional military "reach," and the unprecedented Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, when coupled with the US reaction to that invasion and the probable initiation of a new round of US-Soviet confrontations in the Third World, bode ill for the future of US-Soviet collaboration and for Soviet reformism at home. This argument has power. And, as noted below, there are other critical new factors in the international context. More so than the domestic factors noted above, therefore, the new international context could fundamentally alter the pattern of succession. But in what ways, and to what extent?

In order to specify the possible impact, we need a base line. Closer inspection of previous successions reveals that in certain respects, the coming succession will take place in an international context not unsimilar in important ways to that of the earlier successions.

During Stage 1 of both the Stalin and Khrushchev successions, the Soviet Union was on the defensive in international affairs. A new presidential administration in Washington had adopted what Moscow saw as a militant posture and a globalist perspective (John Foster Dulles and the rhetoric of "rollback"; Lyndon B. Johnson and the Americanization of the Vietnam War). This perception undermined arguments within the Soviet political elite for substantive concessions geared toward collaboration with the United States on issues of core importance in East-West relations. Soviet caution, absorption in domestic problems and politics, and recognition of the USSR's relative military weakness contributed to avoidance of dangerous US-Soviet confrontations. However, the US counteroffensives simultaneously strengthened resolve within the Soviet political elite not to be "contained" and facilitated the victory of those who argued for the development of Soviet military capacity to play a truly competitive global role.[38]

During the first years of Stage 1, many Soviet leaders were genuinely apprehensive (if not fearful) that the US counteroffensive could become a direct threat to Soviet national security—either through rollback or "bridge-building" in Eastern Europe (viewed in 1954, as in 1966, as an effort to destabilize Soviet control over that region) or through escalation of the war in Vietnam to levels that required a Soviet response-in-kind (the same fears existed both in 1954 and 1966). But during the subsequent years of Stage 1, Soviet leaders arrived at a more sober assessment, becoming satisfied that the operative goal of US policy was containment, not rollback. During the Stalin succession, the United States did not attempt to save the French in Indochina, the Geneva summit satisfied Khrushchev that the United States feared the Soviet Union, and the Western failure to aid the Hungarian freedom-fighters in 1956 convinced Khrushchev that all talk of rollback was mere rhetoric.[39] Similarly, during the Khrushchev succession, the United States neither invaded North Vietnam nor used nuclear weapons; the Kiesinger-Brandt coalition in West Germany convinced Soviet leaders that the West German government was now interested in normalization of relations, not destabilization; and the Western failure to aid Czechoslovakia in 1968 reaffirmed tacit Western recognition of Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe.

During Stage 2, on the eve of Khrushchev's and Brezhnev's presentations of their grand designs for collaborative competition, there were also striking similarities in the international context. Both Khrushchev and Brezhnev had come to the conclusion that rollback was no longer the operative goal of US policy. Both had confronted the United States on an issue close to their vital commitments—Khrushchev over Berlin in November 1958, and Brezhnev over Jordan and Cienfuegos in the fall of 1970—and the United States had stood firm. Both perceived the United States to be *in need* of détente—Khrushchev because of the US recession of 1957, because of the Soviet surge forward in strategic rocketry, and because of the accelerating process of decolonization in the Third World; Brezhnev because the United States was frustrated in Vietnam, torn by domestic dissent resulting from antiwar dissent and racial divisions, and

[38] Military expansion after Stalin and Khrushchev is sometimes explained as a side payment to the military to curry support during the power struggle. This interpretation strikes me as narrow and misleading. In both cases, it exaggerates the power of the military and understates the military implications of the geopolitical perspectives embraced by civilian politicians.

[39] Schurmann, op. cit., pp. 248–53. Further support for this interpretation appears in Khrushchev's memoirs. See *Khrushchev Remembers*, translated and edited by Strobe Talbott, Boston, MA, Little, Brown, 1970, pp. 398–400.

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burdened by the high economic costs of trying to have both guns and butter at the same time. Both Khrushchev and Brezhnev presented their collaborative designs at a time when they perceived themselves to be in a position of "effective strategic parity"[40] with the United States but when they greatly feared that unless the parity relationship were codified and regularized, the United States would make a technological burst forward and leave the Soviet Union behind once again. Then, too, both presented their collaborative designs at a time when they viewed the PRC as a rival or threat; indeed, both intended their designs in part to contain the expansion of Chinese power and influence. Both advanced their collaborative offerings at a time when Soviet expectations about trends in the Third World were either high or rising (relative to what they had been two or three years earlier). Finally, Khrushchev and Brezhnev advanced their collaborative offerings the year before a US presidential election, and at a time when Soviet leaders perceived trends among US leaders to be advantageous to the cause of collaboration. Dulles had been hospitalized toward the end of 1958, with all public indications pointing to terminal cancer, and Christian Herter, his successor as US Secretary of State, was perceived by Soviet leaders as favoring the cause of collaboration. In like manner, the Kissinger-Nixon team had proven, during 1969–70, to be congenial to Soviet negotiators as "businesslike" and "realistic."[41]

In both Stage 1 and Stage 2, then, there were manifold similarities in the international context. Such similarities make it especially difficult to weigh the independent causal impact of the succession process on policy, for it is by no means clear whether internal or external factors were decisive.

During Stage 1 of both successions, a relatively "hard-line," or traditionalist, position emerged victorious in both domestic and defense policy, outflanking more reformist and collaborative programs. Was this a reflection of the strength of traditionalist forces (both civilian and military) within the Soviet political elite? Or was it a result of a perception (credible, though exaggerated) that a threatening international environment required leaning on, and building up, the traditional strengths of the system? And if it was a little of both, how do we determine which was decisive, in light of the fact that there are only two cases with which to work and no variance in outcomes between them?

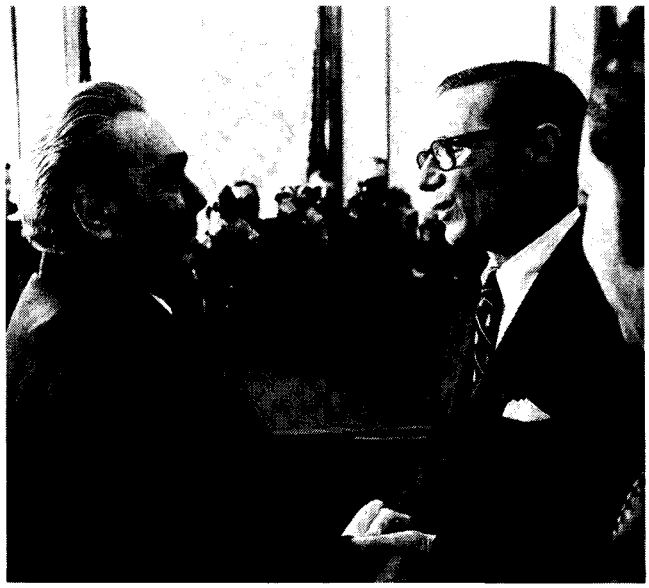
Similarities in the international context during Stage 2 of the political successions do not solve the problem. On the one hand, one could argue that Soviet elite reevaluation of US ambitions and needs made possible the advancement of a collaborative design. On the other hand, one could argue that, once the power struggle had largely been decided, the need for opportunistic exaggeration of external threats had receded, so that the Soviet leader could return to the task of implementing the post-Stalin consensus through moderate reformism at home and collaborative competition abroad. Thus, the matter remains a subject for future research.[42]

What makes these questions especially compelling is their immediate relevance to the coming Brezhnev succession. As in the past, the immediate succession to Brezhnev's position may well coincide with the

[40] "Effective strategic parity" means the ability to make one's adversary act as if one actually possessed strategic parity. Thus, Khrushchev did not actually possess such parity in 1959, but he tried to play on the psychological impact of Sputnik and the Soviet ICBM to bluff the West into believing that the USSR had achieved parity.

[41] In "Patterns of Leadership," I note the remarkable correlation between fundamental changes in Soviet domestic policy and the first year of US presidential terms from 1953 through 1973, with the exception of the Lyndon Johnson interregnum of 1963–64. Similar correlations appear to exist in foreign policy. I am now engaged in research to determine how Soviet leaders defined the nature of US intentions at crucial turning points in policy. Franklyn Griffiths, op. cit., discovered a "bunching" of Soviet arms control concessions in the year before US presidential elections.

[42] Alternative methodologies that might be used to address the issue can be found in Dinerstein, op. cit.; Griffiths, op. cit.; and Dina Rome Spechler, *Domestic Influences on Soviet Foreign Policy*, Washington, DC, University Press of America, 1978.



Party General Secretary L.I. Brezhnev receives then US Treasury Secretary William Simon in the Kremlin on November 30, 1976, before a meeting of the US-USSR Trade and Economic Council.

—TASS from Sovfoto.

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onset of a new presidential term (or administration) in the United States. As in the past, that new term will probably be marked by an upsurge (already under way) of US militancy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, by rhetoric and actions geared toward a military buildup close to Soviet borders, and by a new doctrine of containment. As in the past, there may be considerable ambiguity among the Soviet political elite as to how far the US counteroffensive is intended or likely to go in threatening Soviet security. Will the United States, for example, seek a tacit military alliance with the PRC? Will it strive for or attain technological breakthroughs geared toward reestablishing strategic superiority? Will the arms buildup in Western Europe go beyond Pershing and cruise missiles to include the neutron bomb and other advances? Will US frustration in the Third World lead to the resurrection of some doctrinal variant of "massive retaliation"? These are open questions, but in light of the tendency to "oversell" one's case in American political debate,[43] it is probable that Soviet leaders will be led to misperceive actual US intentions. And the temptations built into the Soviet power struggle will provide an incentive to publicly exaggerate the US threat, even in the case of those who are not given to exaggeration in their private thoughts.

Nonetheless, there are three critical differences between the international context of the coming political succession and that of the previous ones. First, each of the past successions began at a time of distinct Soviet strategic and conventional inferiority relative to the United States. As noted above, that will no longer be the case, for the Brezhnev succession will commence with the Soviet Union in a position of rough strategic parity and selective conventional superiority (in the Persian Gulf region, among others). Second, the Brezhnev succession will take place in the shadow of the frustration of détente in recent years; therefore, it will proceed in the atmosphere of whatever disillusionment has set in in Moscow regarding the détente process. Third, both the Stalin and Khrushchev successions began on the heels of a short period of *diminished* Soviet activism in foreign policy (in the early 1950's, vis-à-vis the Third World, the Korean war, and Western Europe; in 1964, with respect to the Soviet commitment to North Vietnam, Laos, and East Germany). In contrast, the coming succession will get under way on the heels of a period of increased Soviet global activism.

What difference will these new factors make? It would be reckless to predict with confidence, for we do not know how far the US counteroffensive will go and cannot possibly know what conclusions Soviet leaders will reach in their current dialogue over the changing nature of the international situation. But three scenarios are possible, each embodying a distinctive mix of the past and present causal factors by which the relationship between political succession and foreign policy has been shaped.

The first scenario would play down the importance of new factors and would posit a benign Soviet response to a US counteroffensive, much in line with previous patterns. In this scenario, the next generation of Soviet leaders—absorbed in the solution of domestic problems and aware that the solution of those problems requires both moderate reformism and "economic détente" with the West; eager to codify the arms race at current levels of parity to avoid another spiral of defense expenditures; hoping to avoid overextending themselves in the Third World and to consolidate recent gains there; and confident that time favors the Soviet Union, that the US counteroffensive is bound to be short-lived, and that, for both sides, there is no alternative to détente—may turn inward during Stage 1 of the political succession. Or, alternatively, they may forge a consensus on a collaborative offering of modest proportions: arms control, an effort to defuse the most immediate tensions, and selective détente with governments in Western Europe.

The second scenario would posit a hostile, competitive Soviet response, emphasizing the difference that new factors are likely to make. New Soviet capabilities, perspectives, and commitments, combined with the exaggeration of threats during the succession process and the emergence of a more self-confident generation of Soviet leaders, could reinforce a determination to "show the Americans."[44] During the previous two successions, US counteroffensives fostered or reinforced an inward orientation in Soviet foreign behavior but simultaneously reinforced the Soviet determination to attain parity and to aim for a truly competitive role in world affairs. However, an *analogous* response in the current circumstances would be more far-reaching. It would manifest itself in the Soviet Union's determination to use its *existing* capacity in defense of its worldwide commitments and to expand those commitments in order to demonstrate that global activism, not the acceptance of containment, is the basis of Soviet foreign policy. This response would not necessarily be reckless or confrontational on a broad

[43] On "oversell" in American politics, see Theodore J. Lowi, *The End of Liberalism,* New York, NY, W.W. Norton, 1969, pp. 174 f.

[44] In recent interviews in Moscow, Jerry Hough heard much of a desire to "show the Americans." See his "Why the Russians Invaded," *The Nation* (New York, NY), Mar. 1, 1980, p. 233.

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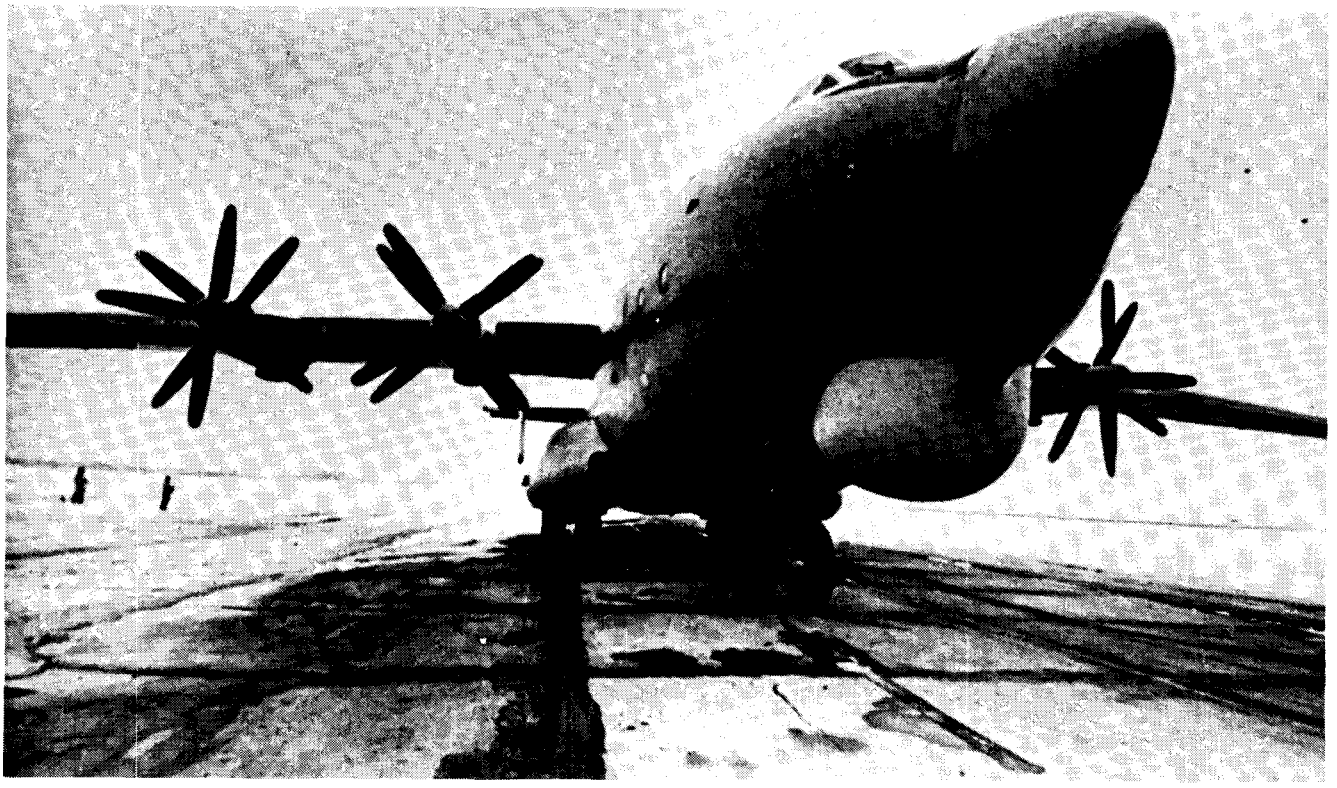
scale—though it could come to that if events got out of hand. Yet it would be decidedly competitive, involving seizure of opportunities to expand influence and alliances and testing of the distinction between primary and secondary US interests, but at the same time entailing exercise of a good measure of respect for US national security concerns.

Such a highly competitive posture abroad might well be incompatible with moderate reformism at home. Since there is little slack in the Soviet economy, major budgetary redistributions to benefit the consumer would have to come out of the defense budget, an unlikely eventuality in the international context posited by this scenario.[45] Institutional reforms might be feasible in such an atmosphere, as they were in 1957–58 and 1965–66. But the more hostile the international context, the less the likelihood that such reforms could be initiated without a highly unified and purposeful leadership. In sum, the second scenario would diminish the prospects for moderate reformism at home, even if it would not wipe them out.

The third scenario is the least likely yet could become more probable if, in Soviet eyes, the US counteroffensive goes too far. Should the United States strive for maximal goals, including a tacit military alliance with the PRC and military confrontation with the Soviet Union at various points on the globe, the Soviet leadership might return to the mentality of 1948. If so, the post-Stalin consensus would break down, a Russite-fundamentalist reaction against all reformist tendencies would arise, and the Soviet Union would engage the United States and China in a militant confrontation on its own borders.[46] Such confrontation at home and abroad would undoubtedly be a despera-

[45] For a highly innovative empirical demonstration that political successions since Stalin in Soviet-type regimes have resulted in substantial gains for the consumer through budgetary redistributions, see Valerie Bunce, "Elite Succession, Petrification and Policy Innovation in Communist States: An Empirical Assessment," *Comparative Political Studies* (Beverly Hills, CA), April 1976; and idem, "The Succession Connection: Policy Cycles and Political Change in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe," *The American Political Science Review* (Menasha, WI), forthcoming.

[46] For this scenario, see Yanov, *Detente After Brezhnev;* and idem, *The Russian New Right,* Berkeley, CA, Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1978.



The expansion of Soviet military power during the Brezhnev years has included production of equipment for military airlift, such as the AN-22 craft shown here.

—EUPRA.

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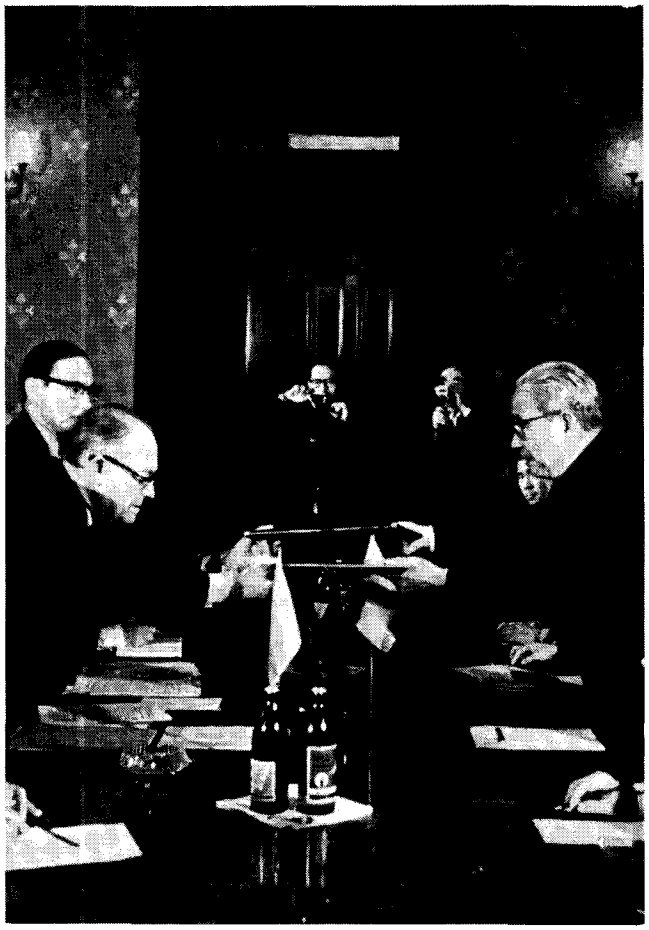
tion measure, for the costs would be immense. Nevertheless, it cannot be ruled out as a possible response to what the Soviets would very likely see as an international context of "encirclement."[47]

Which scenario characterizes Stage 1 of the coming succession will obviously have an impact on the course of Stage 2. But if the post-Stalin consensus does not break down and if by the time a new party leader consolidates his position the Soviet elite still has "a lot to hope for and a lot to fear"[48] from the United States, it seems likely that the party leader will forge a program based on moderate reformism at home and collaborative competition abroad. Soviet domestic needs and political pressures will not have changed radically, and the "objective" US-Soviet need to regulate the arms race, avoid unwanted confrontation, and develop a more balanced conception of rapprochement within the strategic triangle will remain (again, assuming that neither the second nor the third scenario has broken down the post-Stalin consensus). Moreover, the Soviet succession will have reached the stage when the seizure of such opportunities will be politically more feasible.

Of course, it is impossible to predict whether the specific program so forged can satisfy both the Soviet political elite and political forces in Washington. That may hinge on the extent to which conditions that preceded the previous grand designs have been recreated—conditions that indeed gave Soviet leaders a lot to hope for and a lot to fear (but not *too much* to fear) from the United States. And even then it is impossible to predict whether international conditions and events will support or undermine the continuation of a new US-Soviet détente.

5. The role of accidents, irrationality, and unprecedented acts of leadership. Nothing written here is meant to ignore the limits of prediction or to deny the role of accidents, irrationality, or unprecedented acts of leadership in historical evolution. Of necessity, I have not touched on the "shocks" that could create new trends in Soviet politics. For example, a Sino-Soviet war (however short) could set in motion such trends. So could a dramatic Soviet move in search of a quick win abroad to bolster factional fortunes—though it is almost impossible to identify confrontational behavior of this sort during Stage 1 of the past two successions. Or a creative leadership might consciously seek to alter established trends. Although the equivalent of a Pope John XXIII may not be on the Soviet horizon, creativity of a less far-reaching sort cannot be ruled out. For example, a party leader could himself be the first to propose a program for technocratic reforms of the economy, thereby heading off unnecessary polarization from the sort of opportunistic antireform polemics that both Malenkov and Kosygin provoked.



An exchange of papers during the first session of another round of Sino-Soviet negotiations, on October 17, 1979, in Moscow. At the left is Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister L.F. Il'ichëv; at the right, Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Wang Yuping. The talks were suspended by the Chinese in January 1980 in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

—TASS from Sovfoto.

To sum up, similarities between the Stalin and Khrushchev successions would lead us to anticipate a two-stage process of political succession, characterized by the advancement of rival programs for sig-

[47] For a highly insightful structural analysis of the possible impact of "encirclement" on Soviet domestic and foreign policy, see Kenneth T. Jowitt, *Images of Detente and the Soviet Political Order*, Berkeley, CA. Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1977.

[48] Seweryn Bialer, "A Risk Carefully Taken," *The Washington Post*, Jan. 18, 1980, p. A-17.

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nificant policy change, by policy zigzags, by the polarization of positions among the major antagonists, and by the eventual emergence of a leader who sponsors a program for moderate reformism at home and US-Soviet collaboration abroad. But several new factors in Soviet domestic politics (deteriorating economic conditions, a dearth of slack in the economy, and massive generational turnover) could make the power struggle of the 1980's far less smooth than that of the 1960's, though perhaps not quite as freewheeling as that of the 1950's. And several new factors in Soviet foreign policy (military parity with the United States, frustration with détente, and expanded Soviet activism in the Third World)—when coupled with a more freewheeling power struggle and in the context of another US counteroffensive against Soviet activism in the Third World—could break down the post-Stalin consensus and temporarily suppress the reformist impulse in Soviet domestic and foreign policy. However, the reformist impulse has deep roots, and would be repressed only under extreme conditions.

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Soviet Letters Under Brezhnev

By Maurice Friedberg

Evaluation of the achievements of Soviet literature during the Brezhnev era is of both intrinsic and extraliterary interest. On the one hand, one may—in the tradition of the great 19th-century critic of Russian literature Vissarion Belinskiy—find considerable merit in chronicling the literary events of each passing year. On the other hand, developments in literature, particularly in light of the state monopoly of public publishing that exists in the USSR, also shed much light on matters of artistic and general freedom of expression there and tend to indicate many of the social and/or spiritual issues that agitate better-educated Soviet citizens.

Can we justifiably speak of a "Brezhnev era" in Soviet letters? Yes, and within limitations not much stricter than those that allow us to view the entire category of post-Stalin writings as a separate corpus, quite distinct from the one that preceded it. To be sure, as with the writings of any era, Russian literature published during the 15-odd years that L.I. Brezhnev has been leader of the Soviet Union includes works conceived or actually written earlier, even some by writers who had been active as far back as the 1920's. However, readers ordinarily do not differentiate between revivals of long-neglected works (or initial publications of works written earlier) and the first printed efforts of younger, contemporary poets, novelists, and dramatists, but tend to view them all as "new."[1]

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Emphasis on Private Concerns

The central feature of Soviet Russian writing from the mid-1960's to the present has been its preoccupation with private human concerns. It is characteristic of the overall moderate conservatism of the Brezhnev years that the overtly political, reformist writing that flourished under Nikita Khrushchev is generally not tolerated. At the same time, however, there has been no major effort to reintroduce the obligatory shrill political militancy that one associates with Soviet literature of the Stalin era. Russian writing of the Brezhnev period occupies, in terms of ideological latitude, an intermediate position. It is more doctrinaire than literature of the Khrushchev era, but considerably less rigid than that of Yosif Stalin's time. This environment, together with what may be called an official attitude of benign neglect toward moderate experimentation in form (or, more precisely, the toleration of what — by rigid standards of Soviet traditionalism — might be seen as unconventional litera-

[1] This phenomenon is discussed in *Sovetskiy chitatel'. Opyt konkretno-sotsiologicheskogo issledovaniya* (The Soviet Reader. An Experiment in Concrete Sociological Research), Moscow, Kniga, 1968; B.S. Meylakh, Ed., *Khudozhestvennoye vospriyatiye* (Artistic Perception), Leningrad, Nauka, 1971; and *Kniga i chteniye v zhizni nebol'shikh gorodov* (Book[s] and Reading in the Life of Small Cities), Moscow, Kniga, 1973.

Interestingly, public preferences for Russian translations from West European and American fiction, poetry, and drama in the post-Stalin era have generally mirrored attitudes toward Soviet writing too. However, there tends to be somewhat greater emphasis on pure entertainment or "escapism" in the choices of translations. See the author's *A Decade of Euphoria: Western Literature in Post-Stalin Russia, 1954–64*, Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press, 1977, and "The US in the USSR: American Literature through the Filter of Recent Soviet Publishing and Criticism," *Critical Inquiry* (Chicago, IL), Spring 1976, pp. 519–83.

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ture), has encouraged the production of reasonably competent writing.[2] While generally more drab and boring than the prose, drama, and verse of the Khrushchev decade, Soviet books and literary journals of the last 15 years are at least not ludicrously contrived and indeed downright offensive, as were many of those published during Stalin's declining years.[3] By and large, recent Soviet fiction offers believable protagonists and genuine human conflicts, both indispensable attributes for any work expecting to have a degree of reader appeal.

In evaluating this trend, one may argue that private conflicts and aspirations and preoccupation with self are proper concerns of imaginative literature as we understand it and that there is no reason why literature *should* grapple with social problems. In and of itself, this thesis is uncontestable, and one may find ample evidence to support it in Russia's own 19th-century writing. Still, we discover on closer scrutiny that even these earlier works did tackle, in essence, the problem of the happiness of the individual in his oftentimes hopeless conflict with the demands of an intolerant society and an omnipotent state. In order to enlist the reader's sympathies for their heroes, prerevolutionary Russian authors felt compelled to cast at least some doubt on society's wisdom or the state's justice; this was true of Aleksandr Pushkin in *Bronze Horseman,* Nikolay Gogol in "The Overcoat," Ivan Turgenev in *Sportsman's Sketches,* and Fëdor Dostoyevsky in *Poor Folk.* However "apolitical," a writer must, we submit, *feel free* to adopt such a critical stance.

[2]Here we speak, obviously, of the "average" output of the USSR's more than 7,000 professional writers. *Kratkaya literaturnaya entsiklopediya* (Short Encyclopedia of Literature), Moscow, Sovetskaya entsiklopediya, Vol. VII, 1972, p. 112, reported that the membership of the Union of Soviet Writers was 7,280.

[3]Vera S. Dunham's *In Stalin's Time* (New York, NY, Cambridge University Press, 1976) offers an excellent description and analysis of pulp fiction of that period.

In December 1971, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn pays his last respects to Aleksandr T. Tvardovskiy, the man who published Solzhenitsyn's One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich *in the pages of* Novyy mir *in 1962. Solzhenitsyn now lives in exile in the United States.*

—Black Star.

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In this respect, Soviet writers of the 1970's feel far more constraints than did Russian authors of the past—particularly those who wrote during the Empire's last decades. And this, in turn, sometimes imposes severe limitations on the contemporary Soviet writer's choices of themes, protagonists, and situations—constraints that extend far beyond the overtly political. To find a comparable degree of political latitude (or lack of it), one might look to the neoclassical writing of the era of enlightened absolutism in 18th-century Russia. Then, as today, creators of poetry, drama, and prose felt reasonably free to depict, usually with considerable sympathy, an individual's sense of dissatisfaction or even of personal tragedy, but on condition of bypassing in silence its social roots.

Should today's Soviet literary confines appear intolerably narrow to a casual observer, a better sense of perspective is obtained if we recall that preoccupation with the private, the personal, at least allows authors to eschew the hortatory optimism that was all but obligatory during Stalin's last years. In addition, the manifestation of compassion for misfits and failures that is tolerated by the censors (even while they forbid authors to discuss what a Marxist critic would call the "objective" factors creating such types) is considerably closer to traditions of pre-Soviet "philanthropic" Russian literature than the contempt for weakness and failure that was the hallmark of Soviet writing during the Stalin era.

Soviet literature in the Brezhnev years has lacked the extremes of "thaw" and "freeze" that characterized the first post-Stalin period, under N.S. Khrushchev. In the wake of Stalin's death there was initially much demand for what may be called anti-Stalinist muckraking writing. The works then published exposed, with varying degrees of explicitness and artistic success, some of the evils of Stalinism. That type of writing reached its apex in 1962 with the publication of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich.*[4] This liberal "thaw" was followed by a "freeze," which continued until Khrushchev's downfall two years later. After Brezhnev's accession to power, the "freeze" moderated somewhat, but there was never a genuine "warm spell." Rather, the climate of public permissiveness in Soviet literature has remained at a relatively constant "chill." Most of the liberal firebrands of the first post-Stalin decade have grown tame, and a significant

[4] The novel was originally published in 1962 in *Novyy mir* (Moscow). An English-language translation by Max Hayward and Ronald Hingley appeared in 1963 (New York, NY, Praeger).

Anna Akhmatova, whose lyric poetry—suppressed during the Stalin era—is now widely read in the Soviet Union.

TASS from Sovfoto.

number have emigrated to the West. In addition to Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, these include Andrey Sinyavskiy ("Abram Tertz"), Viktor Nekrasov, Vladimir Maksimov, Anatoliy Gladilin, Grigoriy Svirskiy, Yosif Brodskiy, Anatoliy Kuznetsov, and Aleksandr Galich (the last two now deceased). By mid-1980, there were indications that other Soviet authors may soon join the ranks of the émigrés.

While the Brezhnev regime has made it clear that politically unorthodox writing will not be tolerated (thereby driving troublesome authors from public print to the catacombs of *samizdat*), it has made no effort to stop another process that began during the Khrushchev decade, namely, the resurrection of works by authors who had suffered boycott or worse under Stalin. In an obvious reaction to the contrived "public" character of Stalinist Socialist Realism, in which human protagonists were often but a function of political slogans, the mid-1950's witnessed a surge of interest in 20th-century Russian poets who emphasized private concerns. Thus, there was a revived demand for the few extant copies (or typewritten texts) of Osip Mandel'shtam, a victim of the Great Purges, whose work might have been assumed totally forgotten after many decades of nonpublication. There was a similar rediscovery of Anna Akhmatova, the grand old lady of Russian lyric verse, then still alive, who only a few years earlier had been denounced as a half-nun and a half-whore; of Nikolay Zabolotskiy, the singer of symbiosis of man and nature, then just recently released from a labor camp; and of Marina Tsvetayeva, another lyric poet, who had returned from

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Parisian exile on the eve of World War II only to commit suicide shortly thereafter. All were rescued from oblivion and were reunited, as it were, to the body of modern Russian poetry at a time when many of the Stalinist versifiers, whose rhymed propagandistic "public" writings had earlier been extolled, were viewed with condescension.[5] In the Brezhnev era, works by the rehabilitated poets have remained "legal," if often out of print. Sometimes they have even been reprinted.

It should be noted that a number of older poets—such as Leonid Martynov, Nikolay Aseyev, Pavel Antokol'skiy, Semën Kirsanov, and Vladimir Lugovskoy—who had earlier (whether under pressure or out of sincere conviction) produced much conventional politicized verse during the Stalin era published some strong denunciations of Stalinism after the dictator's death. Indeed, Martynov and Kirsanov were among the most articulate older spokesmen for the liberal forces favoring the "thaw." Subsequently, however, these and other established poets, ranging from the carefree, joyous, and simple Viktor Bokov to the complex and philosophical Arseniy Tarkovskiy, came—under some pressure—to abandon overt politics, and reverted to poetry's traditional concerns.

Boris Pasternak, a poet who over the years had often been ahead of literary fashions (an early advocate of experimentation, he was also among the first to disavow its excesses), was, once again, a harbinger of moods that other poets would reflect a decade later. His *Doctor Zhivago,* a very poetic novel completed in 1955, eschews overt political concerns. Pasternak's work is an impassioned paean to the right of the individual to be entirely engrossed in his pursuit of private happiness even in the midst of momentous social upheavals. Submitted to *Novyy mir,* now a run-of-the-mill literary monthly but once the rallying banner of the liberal anti-Stalinist intelligentsia, the novel was turned down, admittedly for political reasons, in what must surely be the longest rejection slip ever received by any author.[6] In retrospect, it appears that Pasternak's sin was one of omission rather than commission. It was his failure to "properly" raise and then just as "properly" answer some obligatory political questions, rather than any overt political statements, that could not be tolerated in his long work.

The Brezhnev era has seen new names added to the list of victims of Stalin's purges whose works have been reprinted for the first time in many decades—most notably, Boris Pilnyak. Other purge victims, such as Nikolay Gumilëv and Yevgeniy Zamyatin, remain proscribed.

Decline of the Novel

The Pasternak episode is instructive with respect to the forces which have brought a general decline of the novel in Soviet letters of the 1960's and 1970's. It is clear that fewer novels are being published than during the preceding period, and one suspects that fewer are being written. We appear to be dealing here not merely with a normal downturn in a periodic cycle of growth and exhaustion of this particular literary form, but also with a larger shift in the fortunes of it and other forms as an indirect response to the political pressures applied to Soviet literature.

In the last decade of Stalin's rule, the novel had dominated the Russian literary scene. Most of the novels of the period were crude potboilers manufactured en masse to exacting ideological specifications and differing, by and large, only in their settings. There were industrial novels, collective farm novels, military novels, and even research institute novels. In the first two categories, protagonists were crudely divided into heroes and villains, depending on their roles in the struggle for higher productivity; in the last two, the criteria were much the same, except that here it was military victories and scientific progress that were at stake. Regardless of the locales and of the professions of their central characters, many Soviet novels of the period also featured among their casts a *raisonneur* or two (a throwback again to the neoclassical era), who—usually in the modern guise of rural district party secretary or factory Komsomol organizer—offered a running political commentary of sorts on unfolding events.[7]

In their pristine form, such literary creations by and large disappeared with Stalin's demise. However, the novel form continued to be a highly politicized literary genre. By virtue of its sheer bulk, the novel is peculiarly vulnerable to political demands for the "correct"

[5] The backlash directed at such poets as Vladimir Mayakovskiy, who, in Boris Pasternak's words, had been implanted by force during the Stalin era like potatoes in the reign of Catherine the Great, was understandable, although sometimes misguided. In the case of Mayakovskiy, the public had seen only the propagandistic side of his work and knew little of his moving lyric poetry.

[6] See *Doctor Zhivago,* New York, NY, Pantheon 1958. The letter to Pasternak was written by the late Konstantin Simonov, then editor of *Novyy mir,* and was published in the November 1958 issue of that monthly. A moderate Stalinist during Stalin's lifetime and an equally moderate liberal after the dictator's death, Simonov appears to have inspired the character Galakhov, an opportunistic Soviet novelist, in Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *The First Circle* (New York, NY, Bantam, 1976).

[7] Many such literary personages are described in Dunham, op. cit.

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The late Soviet novelist Konstantin Simonov at his country dacha in Krasnaya Pakhra in October 1977.

—TASS from Sovfoto.

presentation of "typical" situations, or for an adequate degree of political militancy. It is, therefore, not surprising that many Soviet writers have avoided this form and turned to shorter prose genres, if only because the space limitations of the latter make it impossible to conform to *all* political demands in *every* such work, thereby affording a degree of protection from such demands. Even collections of short pieces rarely satisfy all such requirements.[8]

Thus, while novelists of the older, Stalinist generation have continued to publish in the Brezhnev years—one thinks of Konstantin Simonov's *The Last Summer* or Valentin Katayev's semi-fictionalized memoirs[9]—the whole of post-Stalin Soviet literature, now already a quarter of a century old, has produced few major new novelists.[10] There have, to be sure, been some interesting Russian novels, but these have been written by dissident novelists and have had to be published outside of official Soviet channels. These latter works tend to be didactic. Thus, Solzhenitsyn's

[8] Moreover, if the individual parts of such collections are unoffensive, the works as a collective may go further than the censors anticipate. Over a century ago a tsarist censor was fired for failing to discern that while every short story in Turgenev's *Sportsman's Sketches* may have appeared innocent enough, their *cumulative* effect was quite different and politically objectionable as an attack on the institution of serfdom.

[9] Konstantin Simonov, *Posledneye leto,* Moscow, Sovetskiy pisatel', 1971; and Valentin Katayev, *Razbitaya zhizn' ili volshebnyy god Oberona* (Jaded Life, or Oberon's Magical Year), published in *Novyy mir,* Nos. 7 and 8, 1972.

[10] Naturally, we are judging only on the basis of works that have actually been published. There is the possibility that a major young Soviet novelist *may* currently be writing "for the drawer." The 1960's, for instance, saw the publication of several major novels by Mikhail Bulgakov, a writer who was *not* arrested by Stalin's secret police and who died a natural death before World War II. As a consequence of these discoveries, we have had not only to revise Bulgakov's posthumous reputation (he is now, in retrospect, certainly the greatest satirist so far in 20th-century Russian writing), but also to upgrade our estimate of Soviet writing as a whole.

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August 1914, part of a trilogy in progress, appears intended as an anti-Communist response to such massive Soviet novelistic treatments of the subject of World War I and the Revolution of 1917 as Mikhaïl Sholokhov's *Silent Don* and Aleksey Tolstoy's *The Road to Calvary.*[11] Unlikely as the thought at first may appear, Vladimir Voynovich's comic novel *The Life and Extraordinary Adventures of Private Ivan Chonkin* shares the didacticism of Solzhenitsyn's somber volumes.[12] Both authors call attention to issues that had for decades remained taboo in Soviet writing—in Solzhenitsyn's case, the horrors of the vast Gulag Archipelago,[13] and in Voynovich's, the ludicrous component in two of Stalinist Russia's sacred cows, the army and a science establishment believed capable of reshaping nature itself. Indeed, in an inverted image of Solzhenitsyn's central concern, Voynovich's book attempts to provide a *comic* picture of the Soviet secret police, depicting them as cowardly and stupid.

Toward Poetry and Short Prose

As noted, the wish to eschew political matters has encouraged many Soviet authors to forsake novels for short prose and has also contributed to the rise of poetry. However, there also appears to have been a positive consideration involved in the shift. The latter forms are more attuned to the task of probing man's inner world. A shift in dominant literary genres similar to the one currently discernible in Russian writing occurred at the turn of the century, in the transition from the openly didactic later novels of Lev Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky to the social agnosticism of Anton Chekhov's short prose and plays. The period was also marked by the ascendancy of the Symbolists, who were demonstratively preoccupied with esthetic riddles, mysticism, and sexuality—all subjects their predecessors had believed unworthy of serious concern.

The roster of Soviet poets and writers of short stories who have emerged since Stalin's death is impressive. Even though most of them were products of Soviet schools, these authors, predominantly young, somehow found in themselves the inner resources to discard the shibboleths of Stalinist Socialist Realism and seek new ways. At first, in the flush of destalinization, political concerns loomed high. But with the passage of time, the degree of social involvement abated. Several factors contributed to this development. There was, to be sure, the less permissive atmosphere of the Brezhnev years, but there was also the fact that the influx into literature of younger people—with few memories of the Stalin era—could not but dilute the degree of political involvement.

In poetry, the trend was evident in the decline of some and the emergence of other luminaries. Among the first group, Yevgeniy Yevtushenko was perhaps the most striking example. This "public" poet par excellence symbolized the anti-Stalinist rebellion of the 1950's and early 1960's. But, as literary political activism declined, his star faded.[14] The poets that emerged in the new environment were all essentially "private." This group encompassed three women—Bella Akhmadulina, Novella Matveyeva, and Yunna Morits—with their highly inventive and technically polished verse, particularly in the case of Akhmadulina. (Some of this poetry further enriches that marvelous treasury of 20th-century Russian poetry in which love is viewed from a female vantage point.) It also included Andrey Voznesenskiy, a poet declamatory in his manner but predominantly lyrical in his subject matter, and probably the finest writer of verse to emerge in the USSR since the 1950's. Voznesenskiy appears to be the rightful heir of the young Pasternak and those Russian poets of the 1920's who wanted to *add* to Russia's poetic tradition by further enriching it with imagery from the urban and technological universe, rather than—as Mayakovskiy once proposed in a moment of youthful exuberance—merely throw Pushkin off the ship of modernity. By contrast, the talented Iosif Brodskiy, who now lives in the United States but was formed as a poet in the

[11] *August 1914,* as translated by Michael Glenny, was published in 1972 (New York, NY, Farrar, Straus and Giroux). Translations of the two parts of Sholokhov's *Silent Don* have appeared in English: *And Quiet Flows the Don* (New York, NY, Knopf, 1934); and *The Don Flows to the Sea* (New York, NY, Random House, 1965). Aleksey Tolstoy's *Road to Calvary* was published in English in 1946 (New York, NY, Knopf).

Aleksey Tolstoy died some years ago. However, Sholokhov, the Soviet Union's lone politically loyal winner of the Nobel Prize, as well as the two other major novelists of the 1930's and 1940's, Konstantin Fedin and Leonid Leonov, are still alive. None has published anything very significant in decades.

[12] An English-language translation, by Richard Lourie, was published in 1977 (New York, NY, Farrar, Straus and Giroux). The original was published in Russian in 1975 by YMCA-Press in Paris.

[13] It is worth noting that the theme of Stalin's prisons and of the quest for justice looms large in the work of three other Soviet émigré novelists, all now living in France—Anatoliy Gladilin, Viktor Nekrasov, and Vladimir Maksimov.

[14] Yevtushenko is one of the dramatis personae (under the name of Raspashonka) in what is a truly monumental satirical portrait of the post-Stalin Soviet intelligentsia, Alexander Zinoviev's *Yawning Heights* (New York, NY, Random House, 1979). The author of the book, formerly professor of philosophy at Moscow University, now lives in the West.

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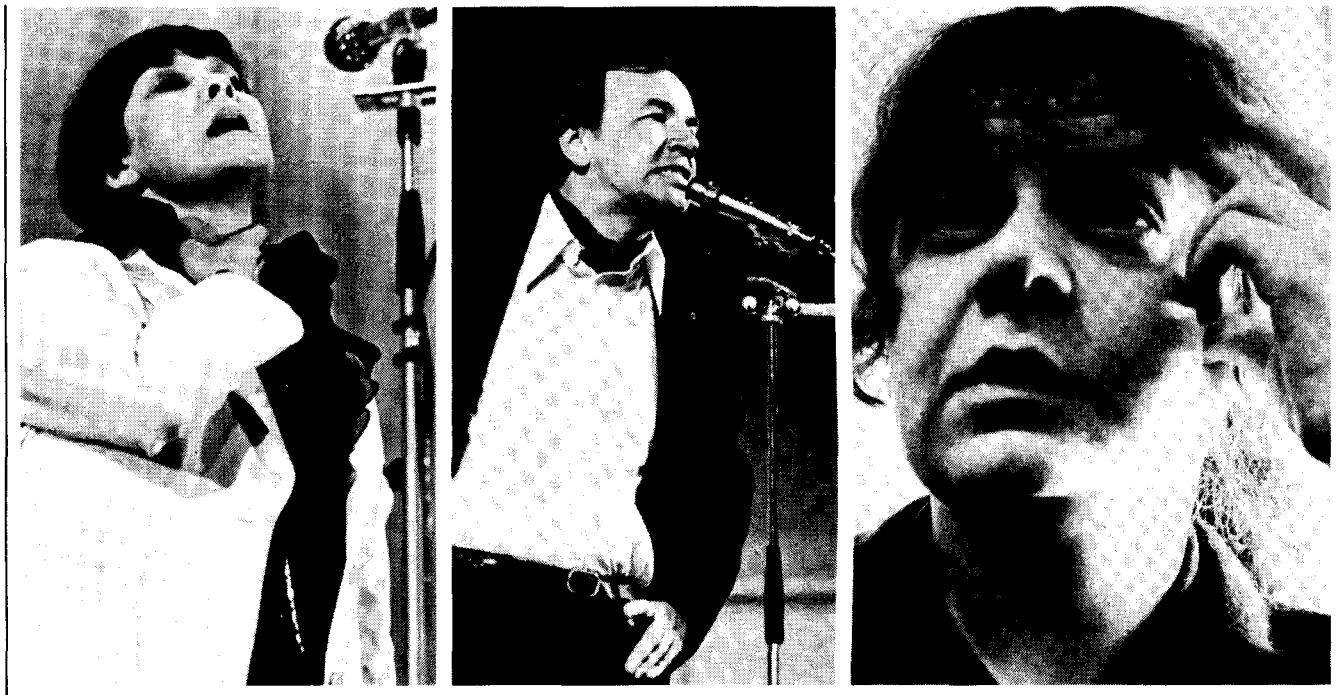

Contemporary Soviet poets who stress personal concerns: left, Bella Akhmadulina at Moscow's House of Literature Workers in March 1978; center, Andrey Voznesenskiy at Moscow's Tchaikovsky Concert Hall in June 1978; and right, Novella Matveyeva at the House of Arts in Peredelkino (the writers' colony outside Moscow), in February 1966.

—TASS from Sovfoto.

USSR, owes more to John Donne, T.S. Eliot, and the English metaphysical poets than to any Russians—unless one goes back to the intellectual and religiously colored verse of Fëdor Tyutchev and Yevgeniy Baratynskiy in the 19th century.

As for the short story and the novella, these forms have been in the ascendancy in Russian belles lettres for more than two decades now, and so far their position continues unchallenged. The short prose genres, if only by virtue of their brevity, do permit the author to pose problems (and not necessarily even within their broader context) without the obligation to suggest solutions, let alone defend their choice. It is probably in part for that reason that short stories and novellas were favored by the Soviet angry young men during the stormy period of destalinization. It was through these forms that there erupted in Soviet publications pent-up grievances against the dead dictator's regime, against at least some of its crimes (usually still only hinted at), and against the social pathology that it had bequeathed.[15] Gradually, however, even this degree of involvement disappeared from legal Soviet publications—which is not to say that the subjects were exhausted and died a natural death. Rejected by Soviet publishers and journals, a great many works dealing with such subjects continued to circulate in *samizdat,* and not a few were subsequently published abroad.[16] Here and there, short works describing poverty, social injustice, and moral corruption may still be published in the USSR—for instance, Fëdor Abramov's *Dve zimy i tri leta* (Two Winters and Three Summers) or Yuriy Trifonov's *Dom na naberezhnoy* (House on the Embankment)—but such are usually

[15] A good example of this writing may be found in Hugh McLean and Walter N. Vickery, Eds., *The Year of Protest, 1956,* New York, NY, Vintage Books, 1961. In addition to that anthology's useful introduction, a good study of the subject is George Gibian, *Interval of Freedom: Soviet Literature During the Thaw, 1954–1957,* Minneapolis, MN, University of Minnesota Press, 1960.

[16] It is worth noting that many were printed in the West without the knowledge, let alone consent, of their authors, who remained in the USSR and in many cases continued to publish "acceptable" works. Indeed, some of the most damning indictments of the Soviet regime belong in the former category. Thus, in this writer's estimate, the most chilling descriptions of Soviet labor camps are not those of Solzhenitsyn, but those found in Varlam Shalamov's eyewitness accounts shaped into concise tales and in Georgiy Vladimov's novel *Faithful Ruslan: The Story of a Guard Dog* (translated by Michael Glenny, New York, NY, Simon and Schuster, 1979), which observes the universe of the gulags through the eyes of a police dog. Both authors are still in the Soviet Union.

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set during the Stalin era.[17]

In recent years, short prose has increasingly been put to other uses, uses suggested, perhaps, by its greatest Russian master, Chekhov. Not a political activist but at the same time not at all an uncritical admirer of the tsarist regime, Chekhov lived in an era of decline in the degree of ideological involvement among the Russian intelligentsia, a setting that bears intriguing resemblance to the USSR of the Brezhnev years. Both periods were ones of disenchantment in the wake of the euphoria and great expectations of years of great reforms. Chekhov demonstrated that the short story and the novella are ideally suited to portray paradoxes, inconsistencies, isolated incidents, chance encounters, and, above all, to convey the flavors and sounds of moods, feelings, premonitions, fears, and aspirations. Chekhov's prose offers unequaled models for the portrayal of loneliness behind a facade of outward sociability, of collectives whose members cannot communicate, of individuals who are emotionally crippled by a society that detests spontaneity—in short, of suffering and discontent that cannot be directly traced to *tangible* causes, economic or social. Dostoyevsky reputedly said that all of Russia's 19th century literature, with its central theme of social compassion, traces its lineage to Gogol's "The Overcoat." If similar hyperbole is permitted, then one might say that the central concerns of serious contemporary Soviet Russian writing—above all, its emphasis on "minor" private concerns as opposed to the "major" public ones of literature of the Stalin era—are clearly inspired by Anton Pavlovich Chekhov, a kindly doctor who, in his role as author, offered sympathy, hinted at a diagnosis, but never presumed to offer advice.

Echoes of Chekhov may also be discerned, not unexpectedly, in post-Stalin Russian drama, although the genre continues in its traditional position as the weakest in Russian writing. Indeed, in recent years some of the most lively and controversial events in Soviet theater have been unorthodox productions of Chekhov's own plays.[18] But Chekhov's imprint has been most important on the Russian short story and the novella.

While many "Chekhovian" attributes may be found in Soviet writing of the early post-Stalin years, they are more typically found in short works of more recent vintage, in which social concerns are kept in the background and a mundane incident in the life of unheroic people forms the modest plot of a story. This literature manifests considerable variety in both subject matter and manner of presentation. There are the touching, unassuming descriptions of love in the short stories of Yuriy Nagibin; the haunting portrayals of often embittered individuals drawn against the background of lush natural surroundings in Yuriy Kazakov; and the very, very American-like drifters and dreamers in the short prose of Vasiliy Aksënov. Each of these writers focuses in his own way not on the destinies of a nation, on military victories, or on economic battles, but on individual, often intimate concerns of men and women who are in many respects the Soviet descendants of 19th-century Russian literature's superfluous men, strong women, humiliated clerks, and frightened lovers.

(One can point to other parallels with 19th-century Russia. While overt political activity is proscribed by the authoritarian state, one can now—just as then—identify writers who are, by Soviet standards, conservatives or reactionaries [for instance, Vadim Kozhevnikov] or those who are "legal liberals" [such as Andrey Bitov or Andrey Voznesenskiy]. And the age-long Russian battle between the Slavophiles and the Westernizers continues unabated—the "internationalist" Aksënovs are regularly challenged by the "truly Russian" Vladimir Soloukhins. While the Soviet authorities are clearly more sympathetic to the latter, they refrain from officially taking sides, lest it be

[17] Trifonov's story, published in the January 1976 issue of *Avrora* (Leningrad), describes moral squalor among the intelligentsia. Specifically, it tells of a young careerist of the Stalin era (the story is set in the late 1940's) who repays the many kindnesses of an aging professor by joining his tormentors. (As if to emphasize the contrast between Stalin's Russia and present-day Soviet society, a postscript to the novella shows the careerist as a down-and-out derelict.) Abramov's novella *Dve zimy . . .* (Leningrad, Sovetskiy Pisatel', 1969) describes a Soviet village on the verge of starvation, but the impact of the story is partly neutralized by having the tale set in wartime. Thus, the privations cannot be blamed on the Soviet regime. By contrast, the same Abramov's novella *Vokrug da okolo* (Around and About), published in the Khrushchev era (in the January 1963 issue of the Leningrad monthly *Neva*), implied that its dismal account of poverty and mismanagement on a collective farm did describe contemporary conditions. Similarly, the semi-fictionalized sketches *(ocherki)* of Soviet rural life published by Yefim Dorosh and Valentin Ovechkin in the Khrushchev years had been presented as reportage of actual conditions.

[18] Naturally, there have been some plays of interest, particularly those staged by Yuriy Lyubimov at Moscow's innovative Sovremennik theater. Yet even the better works by such leading Soviet playwrights as Aleksey Arbuzov and Viktor Rozov are unimpressive in comparison with recent West European and US drama. Indeed, Chingiz Aitmatov's *The Ascent of Mount Fuji*, one of the most successful Soviet plays of the last decade, can be described as, at best, competent.

Anatoliy Efros's original interpretations of such classics as Chekhov's *The Three Sisters*, which broke with the traditional Soviet "upbeat" interpretations of the play, stirred much debate in the 1970's. For a biography of Efros, see *Teatral'naya entsiklopediya* (Encyclopedia of the Theater), Vol. V, Moscow, Sovetskaya entsiklopediya, 1967, pp. 1029–30.

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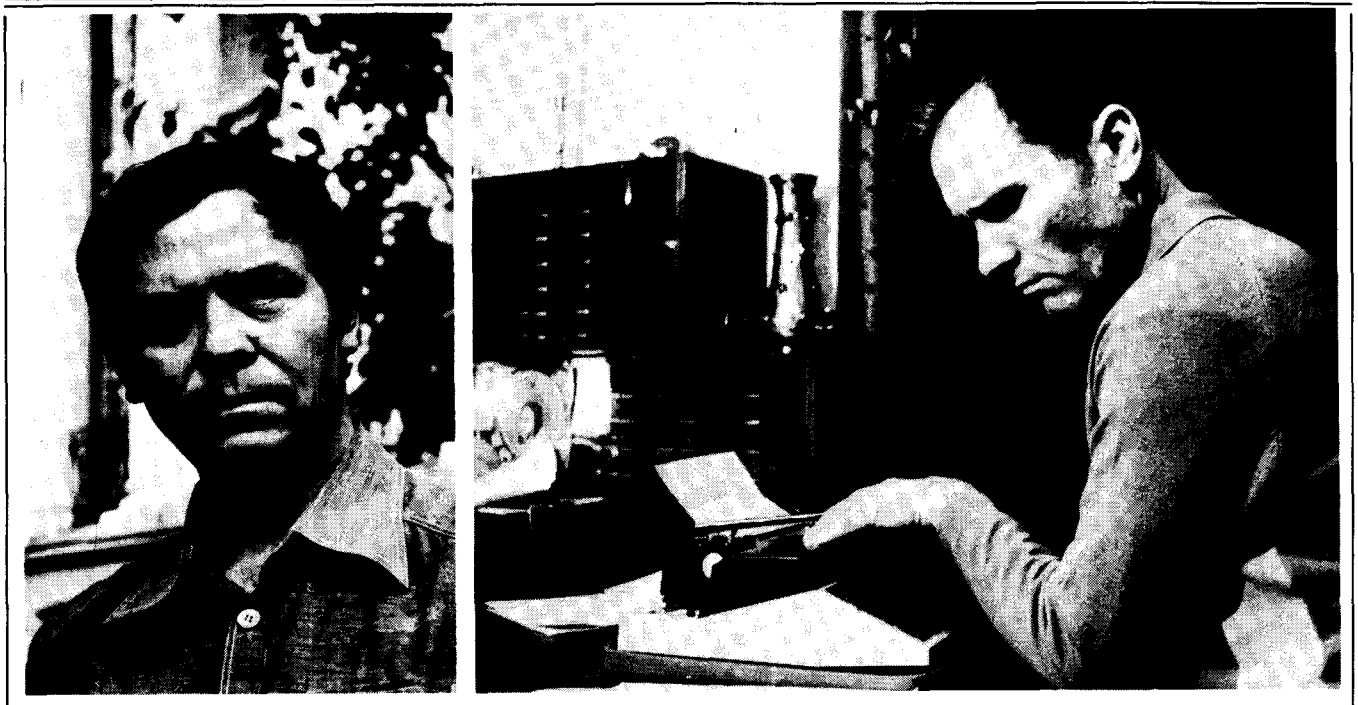

Two accomplished writers of short prose in the USSR during the last 15 years: left, Valentin Rasputin; right, the late Vasiliy Shukshin.

—TASS from Sovfoto.

suggested that *any writer* can presume to speak for the Communist Party.)

Three stories are, in many ways, representative of recent Soviet Russian short prose. The first is Valentin Rasputin's *Den'gi dlya Marii* (Money for Maria).[19] Born in 1937, Rasputin obviously has few memories of the Stalin era. His settings are contemporary, usually rural, and frequently Siberian, and he cultivates an art that is rather rare in Russian fiction—a tightly woven, gripping tale. In *Den'gi dlya Marii,* a farmer's wife in distant Siberia manages the village store. An audit of the books reveals that a sizable sum of money is missing. Everybody is certain of her innocence and wants to help, but the sum is too large. The woman's husband then decides to turn to his estranged brother, who lives far away in a big city. At the end of the story, we see the poorly dressed farmer on a train, where he is the subject of compassion and derision from more affluent passengers. We do not find out whether the rich brother agreed to help, or whether the farmer's wife will end up in jail.

The second example is *Kalina krasnaya* (The Red Guelder Rose)[20] by Vasiliy Shukshin, whose premature death in 1974 at the age of 45 was a serious loss. Not only was Shukshin a very promising author, one of the best among the so-called rural writers *(derevenshchiki)*; he was at least equally prominent as a filmmaker. *Kalina krasnaya* tackles a subject that was once used frequently enough by Soviet authors but was later banished from Soviet writing: a criminal's attempt to break with his past, "to go straight."[21] For the first time in decades, Soviet readers were titillated with descriptions of thieves' dens, of "jobs" being "pulled," and so forth. The story's central character really desires to start life afresh—to return to farming with an honest woman by his side—but, in keeping with the hallowed traditions of similar Western writing, his dream is not to come true. He is murdered by the

[19] Valentin Rasputin's story appeared in *Vniz i vverkh po techeniyu* (Downstream and Upstream), Moscow, Sovetskiy pisatel', 1972.

[20] Vasiliy Shukshin's novella was printed in *Nash sovremennik* (Moscow), No. 4, 1973.

[21] In the 1920's, the subject was treated by such Soviet authors as Venyamin Kaverin, in *Konets khazy* (The End of a Gang), a novel published in Moscow in 1926, and Leonid Leonov, in *Vor* (The Thief), of which an English-language translation appeared in 1960 (New York, NY, Vintage Books). These were serious enough works, even if marred occasionally by an excessive desire to magnify the exotic and sensationalist aspects of the material. However, by 1934, such writings had disappeared in the face of the Soviet state's heavy reliance on forced labor as a means of "rehabilitating" criminals. In that year, however, Nikolay Pogodin did write *Aristokraty* (The Aristocrats, translated in B. Blake, Ed., *Four Soviet Plays,* New York, NY, International Publishers, 1937), which may well be the only *comedy* ever written which has as its setting a penal labor camp.

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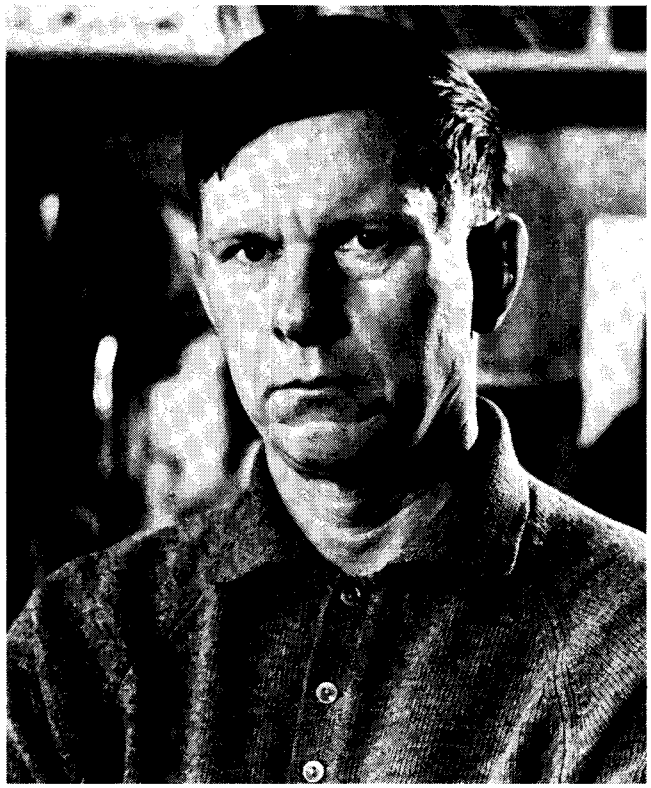
criminals whose world he wanted to leave.[22]

The last example is *Damskiy master* (Ladies' Hairdresser),[23] by Irina Grekova (pseudonym of Yelena Ventsel). Grekova is not a professional writer; now in her 70's, she began to publish fiction less than 20 years ago. The narrator of *Damskiy master* bears much resemblance to the author, who is a professor of mathematics. It is through the eyes of this narrator—now an older woman, a widow or divorcée, who somehow had managed to combine a busy career with the demanding task of bringing up two sons—that we see the world of the young, which includes her junior research associates, secretaries, and also the central character of the story, a male hairdresser. (The choice of the hairdresser's profession is in itself indicative of the change in Soviet literature's concerns. One can hardly visualize a member of such a "frivolous" profession—and a young man at that!—as a chief protagonist in a novella published during the Stalin years.) As the wise and tolerant narrator sees them, the young—obviously as a result of years of Stalinist regimentation—no longer know how to enjoy themselves. Even a college dance is ruined by "educational" games. It is, however, the young hairdresser who shows the deepest wounds inflicted by goal-oriented education. Everything he does must have a useful purpose. He chooses his customers (including a very pretty young woman) for the professionally educational value of the texture of their hair. Similarly, he accepts an invitation to attend a dance because this might prove rewarding as a live sociological exhibit. Instead of reading bulky novels, he is intent on studying (no doubt, for reasons of greater efficiency) literary criticism, which not only describes novels but evaluates them as well. At the end of the story we learn, with relief, that the young man has decided to enter a "normal" profession—working in a factory. Such an ending offers grounds to hope that he will be restored to emotional normalcy.

However different, these three stories share some common attributes. They have genuine human interest, and they avoid annoying didacticism and contrived situations. When viewed against the background of writing of the Stalin period, these are in themselves no mean achievements.

The Future

If prognoses are to be made for the 1980's, one safe prediction would be that, barring major changes in Soviet policies in general, *politically* daring writing will probably be rare.[24] Rather, it is likely that the emphasis will continue to be on personal rather than social themes.



Belorussian novelist Vasiliy Bykov is well known for his tales of war and soldiering. He writes in both Belorussian and Russian.

—TASS from Sovfoto.

One would also expect Russian literature to become more decentralized geographically, as it was in the 1920's. Fewer writers will probably live in and write about Moscow, Leningrad, and the writers' colony of Peredelkino. This development, should it come to pass, would benefit Russian literature. It not only would result in a greater variety of settings and situations but would also enrich the Russian literary language with resources borrowed from many regional dialects.

Most certainly, there will also be an ever growing number of bilingual writers who create (for reasons of

[22] For translated selections from the writings of Rasputin and Shukshin, see Valentin Rasputin, *Live and Remember*, New York, NY, Macmillan, 1978; and Vasiliy Shukshin, *Snowball Berry Red and Other Stories*, Ann Arbor, MI, Ardis Publishers, 1977.

[23] Published in *Novyy mir*, No. 11, 1963.

[24] Such a rarity was Anatoliy Rybakov's novel *Tyazhëlyy pesok* (Heavy Sand), published in *Oktyabr'* (Moscow), Nos. 7–9, 1979. Rybakov provides an unorthodox, sympathetic account of the history of a Jewish family from the tsarist period, through the ordeal of heroism during the Nazi Holocaust, down to the placid present.

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sentiment or of ethnic pride) in their native tongue and also—simultaneously—in Russian, the only language in which real literary fames are made in the USSR. Hence, in the coming decade there should be more authors like Fazil Iskander, the highly effective comic author from Abkhaziya in the Caucasus; Vasiliy Bykov, the Belorussian; or Chingiz Aitmatov, the Kirghiz and Russian author of prose and drama. With linguistic assimilation, there will also be more non-Russian authors writing in Russian alone. Thus, there may emerge in Soviet Russian literature counterparts of such subcategories of American literature as Black writing, Jewish-American writing, and the like.

A prognosis for the 1980's must take into account as well the new émigré Russian literature that is currently being created in Western Europe, Israel, and the United States. This literature promises to produce a body of writing no less substantial than that bequeathed by the earlier émigrés, those who arrived in Paris, Berlin, Warsaw, and Prague in the 1920's.

One looks to Soviet literary *samizdat* for some idea of the thematic concerns and perhaps even styles that would, if permitted, surface in officially sanctioned writing. Judging from the contents of *Metropol'*, a *samizdat* anthology brought out in early 1979, the aspirations are modest indeed. What are some of the taboo subjects? Well, for one, judging by Fazil Iskander's contribution, a more relaxed attitude toward human sexuality—relaxed, that is, by prudish Soviet standards. Yuz Aleshkovskiy goes further—a poem of his is entitled "A Lesbian Song," which for all we know may be the most shocking title in the annals of Soviet verse. Pëtr Kozhevnikov (not to be confused with Vadim or Aleksey Kozhevnikov) describes cynical and bored Soviet 16-year-olds seeking forgetfulness in vodka and sex; his adolescents bear much resemblance to those we remember from books by Great Britain's Angry Young Men in the 1950's. Vladimir Vysotskiy, the actor and balladeer in the tradition of the late Aleksandr Galich, contributed a parody of Pushkin's *Ruslan and Lyudmila.* (It should be recalled that disrespect for the classics is not tolerated in the USSR, and that a parody of Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* was the object of particular outrage during the postwar anti-Semitic purges.[25]) And then there was Boris Vakhtin's "Dublënka" (The Fur Coat), a story about a frightened little man who is a theatrical censor by trade and parrots Marxist classics. *Metropol'* also included contributions by Aksënov, Akhmadulina, and

[25] It is indicative that the author of the parody, Aleksandr Khazin, though a poet and playwright of some distinction, was listed in the literary encyclopedia only following his death in 1976. See *Kratkaya literaturnaya entsiklopediya,* Vol. IX, Moscow, Sovetskaya entsiklopediya, 1978, p. 767.

Among prominent Soviet literary artists who have emigrated to the West during the Brezhnev era: from left to right: Iosif Brodskiy, Vladimir Maksimov, and Viktor Nekrasov.

—Brodskiy photo from Black Star; Maksimov and Nekrasov by Katherine Young.

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Voznesenskiy. Rather innocuous in themselves, these items were significant as tokens of support for the enterprise by some of the most prominent of the younger Soviet authors. Indeed, when some of the less-known contributors to the volume were later expelled from the writers' union, their more famous colleagues rose to their defense.

If *Metropol'* does, indeed, offer some clues about themes that might appear in officially sanctioned journals should another liberal "thaw" occur, then we should expect more vodka and boredom. Perhaps even a more generous dose of sex, but only of the heterosexual variety. (Somehow, one finds it difficult to visualize lesbians frolicking in the pages of *Novyy mir.*) But Soviet censorship is not likely—as long as it continues to exist—to tolerate parodies of itself. And so far there is no evidence that the institution is about to wither away.

Indeed, the present Communist rulers of the USSR seem intent on maintaining a political control over the arts which, while less severe than during the Stalin years, remains tighter than during the Khrushchev period. As long as this is the case, one would not expect Soviet literature to venture often or far into direct assessments or criticism of the existing political system. Rather, like the society at large, Soviet writers and poets can be expected to pursue their quest for meaning and truth on an inward-looking, individual basis.

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Books

Eurocommunist Views of Soviet History

By Michael J. Sodaro

GIUSEPPE BOFFA. *Storia dell'Unione Sovietica* (History of the Soviet Union). Rome, Arnold Mondadori, Vol. I, 1976; Vol. II, 1979.

GUISEPPE BOFFA and GILLES MARTINET. *Dialogo sullo Stalinismo* (Dialogue on Stalinism). Bari, Laterza, 1976.

JEAN ELLEINSTEIN. *Histoire de l'U.R.S.S.* (History of the USSR). Paris, Éditions Sociales, Vol. I, 2nd ed., 1975; Vol. II, 1973; Vol. III, 1974; Vol. IV, 1975.

JEAN ELLEINSTEIN. *Histoire du phénomène stalinien* (History of the Stalinist Phenomenon). Paris, Bernard Grasset, 1975.

JEAN ELLEINSTEIN. *Staline-Trotsky. Le Pouvoir et la Révolution* (Stalin-Trotsky. Power and the Revolution). Paris, Julliard, 1979.

GIULIANO PROCACCI. *Il partito nell'Unione Sovietica, 1917–1945* (The Party in the Soviet Union, 1917–1945). Bari, Laterza, 1974.

ISTITUTO GRAMSCI. *Momenti e problemi della storia dell'URSS* (Aspects and Problems of the History of the USSR). Rome, Editori Riuniti, 1978.

ALEXANDRE COHEN et al. *L'URSS et nous* (The USSR and Us). Paris, Éditions Sociales, 1978.

ALBERTO PONSI. *Partito unico e democrazia in URSS* (The Single Party and Democracy in the USSR). Bari, Laterza, 1977.

S. BERTOLISSI et al. *Studi di storia sovietica* (Studies on Soviet History). Rome, Editori Riuniti, 1978.

FABBIO BETTANIN. *La collettivizzazione delle campagne nell'URSS* (The Collectivization of the Countryside in the USSR). Rome, Editori Riuniti, 1978.

GUIDO ORTONA. *La questione agraria in URSS negli anni Venti* (The Agrarian Question in the USSR in the Twenties). Bari, De Donato, 1978.

RITA DI LEO. *Il modello de Stalin* (Stalin's Model). Milan, Feltrinelli Economica, 1971.

IN HIS FAMOUS interview with the journal *Nuovi Argomenti* in June 1956, Palmiro Togliatti, chief of the Italian Communist Party (PCI), created a swirl of controversy by suggesting that Nikita Khrushchev's critique of Yosif Stalin at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) several months earlier had not gone far enough. What was needed, Togliatti insisted, was a more thorough investigation into "why and how Soviet society could reach certain forms alien to the democratic way . . . ."[1]

While the Soviet leadership was scarcely disposed to take up Togliatti's challenge, scholars associated with the PCI began producing their own studies of Soviet history. Initially, most of these works appeared as articles in the party journal *Studi storici*. More recently, however, Italian Communist authors have produced a spate of book-length histories of the USSR, and nearly all of these have been written from an avowedly critical point of view. Included among these historians are Giuseppe Boffa, a former *l'Unità* correspondent in Moscow, and Giuliano Procacci, a historian at the University of Florence, as well as a host of younger PCI scholars. With the evident encouragement of the party leadership, a number of these writers expounded their views at a conference on Soviet history sponsored by the Gramsci Institute, the

[1] *Nuovi Argomenti* (Rome), June 16, 1956, translated in Russian Institute, Columbia University, *The Anti-Stalin Campaign and International Communism*, New York, NY, Columbia University Press, 1956, p. 120.

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PCI's principal research organization, in January 1978.

Likewise, members of the French Communist Party (PCF) have begun to reassess the Soviet past. By far the most prolific among them is Jean Elleinstein, a prominent PCF historian and a frequent critic of the party leadership. Over the last few years, Elleinstein has published a four-volume history of the USSR, as well as separate volumes on Stalin and Leon Trotsky. Several other French Communist writers have also contributed to this reexamination of Soviet history, and in 1978, five of them collaborated on a volume entitled *L'URSS et nous,* a project that seeks to inspire still more research of a critical nature on the USSR by PCF members in the future.

The books examined here represent the most important contributions to this recent efflorescence of "Soviet studies" in the French and Italian Communist parties. As such, they are very much the product of the ambivalent political atmosphere in which they were written. What they reflect above all is an effort by the leading West European Communist parties to affirm the distinctiveness of Eurocommunism as a movement whose origins and methods differ in significant ways from the Soviet model. At the same time, however, these writings betray the Eurocommunists' unwillingness to break completely with the Soviet heritage. Acute criticism of the USSR is tempered by admiration for the "positive" and "liberating" elements of the Soviet experience. In short, these histories mirror both the Eurocommunists' increased readiness in recent years to criticize the Soviet Union and their manifest uncertainty about how far this criticism should go. Ultimately, what the French and Italian Communists say about the USSR tells us a great deal about themselves.

In view of the multiplicity of events and themes in Soviet history which the authors considered here explore, this analysis of their interpretations will be limited to four problem areas which are of central importance to the Eurocommunists' current political orientations. These are: (1) the relationship between Stalinism and Leninism; (2) the nature of "socialist democracy"; (3) the general character of the USSR under Stalin and Khrushchev; and (4) the question whether the USSR may be considered a socialist system. Special attention will be paid to the ways in which the authors in question differ among themselves. This is a particularly appropriate exercise inasmuch as the books under review are not "official" histories, but display a wide range of interpretations and judgments.

EVER SINCE Khrushchev launched the Soviet destalinization drive in 1956, Stalin has been a legitimate target for attack. It therefore comes as no surprise that Stalin is fair game for contemporary Eurocommunist historians. All of them roundly condemn Stalinism (meaning essentially the Stalinist terror) as a blight on Soviet history whose repetition Communists of all nations must avoid.

There is less consensus, however, on the nature of the relationship between Stalinism and the Leninist tradition. It is especially instructive to compare Boffa and Elleinstein on this question. Boffa, for his part, denies that Stalinism was an inevitable outgrowth of Leninism. He contends that there were major differences between Stalin and V.I. Lenin that went beyond the former's penchant for mass terror. Stalin's conception of the party as a militarized order and his notion of the USSR as the only valid model of socialism are cited as examples of his "originality" and of his distance from various aspects of the Bolshevik tradition. For Boffa, Stalin was a modern incarnation of Russian "Caesarism" who took the Soviet Union closer to a "national" revolution than to a "socialist" one.[2]

On the other hand, Boffa admits that some of the features of Stalinist rule "were implicit in the Leninist conception of the party" and in early Bolshevik practice.[3] These included the willingness to use violence against adversaries of the regime, the establishment of a centralized state and party bureaucracy, the institution of the Cheka (the secret police), and the formation of the Comintern, which took the first steps toward "a new orthodoxy."[4] Curiously, Boffa tends to excuse or even justify a number of these very practices. The Civil War and the Western intervention are blamed for compelling the Bolsheviks to resort to political violence and to impose one-party rule on Russia, measures that Boffa believes were not contemplated by the Bolsheviks prior to 1918.[5] For Boffa, the Bolsheviks' efforts to consolidate their power, however brutal, were fully justified by the overriding necessity of defending the revolution.[6]

Significantly, this position has

[2] *Storia dell'Unione Sovietica*, Vol. I, *Dalla rivoluzione alla seconda guerra mondiale, Lenin e Stalin, 1917–1941* (From the Revolution to the Second World War, Lenin and Stalin, 1917–1941), pp. 615, 301–09, 445, 456.

[3] Ibid., p. 37.

[4] Ibid., pp. 156, 164–65, 167–68, 137.

[5] Boffa maintains that there does not exist "even a single Bolshevik writing from this period which augurs the existence of a single-party [regime]." Ibid., p. 155.

[6] Ibid., p. 166. Elsewhere, Boffa says that the legitimacy of the Bolsheviks' "dictatorship of the proletariat" derived from the party's status as the "general staff" of the revolution and from its construction of "a new state." Ibid., p. 161.

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important implications for Boffa's attitude toward subsequent Soviet practice. In the second volume of his history, Boffa draws a distinction between Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968 and the intervention in Hungary in 1956. While he condemns the former, he sanctions the latter as necessary to prevent "an impending catastrophe."[7] The parallel between these attitudes and Boffa's endorsement of Bolshevik terror and authoritarianism in defense of the revolution during the Civil War (measures which he insists were "limited") is striking.

Thus, despite his generally critical portrayal of the USSR under Stalin and Khrushchev, Boffa tends to be wedded to the Communist tradition when examining the Leninist era. Indeed, his explanation of this era is essentially repeated in his "dialogue on Stalinism" with the French Marxist, Gilles Martinet.

Elleinstein's approach to the problem is roughly similar to Boffa's. The first two volumes of his *Histoire de l'U.R.S.S.*, like Boffa's account, treat the establishment of one-party rule and the institution of the Cheka as grim imperatives forced on the Bolsheviks by perfidious forces bent on their destruction. Without the White terror, he maintains, there would have been no Red terror, and had it not been for the counterrevolutionary activities of other parties, Russia would have had a multiparty system after 1918.[8] What Elleinstein calls "the Stalinist phenomenon" is viewed in his *Histoire de l'U.R.S.S.* as essentially the outgrowth of these historically determined conditions, reinforced by the authoritarian traditions of Russia's tsarist past. This account ignores or plays down the existence of any inherent bias toward violence or authoritarianism in Leninist doctrine.[9]

Elleinstein's *Histoire du phénomène stalinien* comes a bit closer to acknowledging these doctrinal predispositions. Here Elleinstein admits that Lenin tended to underestimate the importance of "democracy" and to overestimate the role of violence in his revolutionary thought. As a consequence, the Leninist period of Soviet history is seen in this work as containing the "germ" and the "possibility" of the Stalinist phenomenon. Once again, however, Elleinstein points to Russia's authoritarian past and to the counterrevolutionary reaction to Bolshevik rule as determining Lenin's thinking on these matters, and he concludes that the resulting brand of socialism *à la russe* has never had anything in common with the type of socialism that might one day develop in the democratic West. The Stalinist phenomenon, he asserts, is strictly a product of Russian history, not of socialism itself.[10]

While Boffa and Elleinstein thus tend to interpret Leninism's approbation of coercive rule as a legitimate response to the *opponents* of the Bolsheviks—a position seconded by Giuliano Procacci[11]—a few Italian and French Communists take issue with this view. Vittorio Strada, the author of several works on Russian culture, traces the origins of Stalinist misconduct to Lenin's theoretical predilections for authoritarianism and violence. As a participant in the Gramsci Institute's 1978 conference on Soviet history, Strada further maintained that Lenin's vision of a "monocentric" society was not intended solely for less developed countries such as Russia but, more alarmingly, was established as a "general formula" deemed valid for all socialist societies.[12] Another scholar at the same conference described Leninist theory as "the anticipator of Stalinism" and accused the Bolsheviks of triggering the Civil War.[13] In addition, the authors of *L'URSS et nous* reject Elleinstein's term "Stalinist phenomenon," precisely because it appears to suggest that Stalin's deeds occurred outside socialist history rather than constituted an integral part of it.[14]

With these few exceptions, however, the writers surveyed here are clearly reticent about associating Lenin with the subsequent actions of Stalin. The founding father of Bolshevism thus remains sacrosanct.

THE QUESTION of what is meant by "democracy" is undoubtedly a critical one for the Eurocom-

[7] *Storia . . .*, Vol. II, *Dalla Guerra patriottica al ruolo di seconda potenza mondiale, Stalin e Chruscëv, 1941-1964* (From the Patriotic War to the Role of Second World Power, Stalin and Khrushchev, 1941-1964), p. 647.

[8] On the lack of Bolshevik responsibility for the Civil War, see *Histoire de l'U.R.S.S.*, Vol. I, *La conquête du pouvoir, 1917-1921* (The Conquest of Power, 1917-1921), 2nd ed., pp. 146, 166-67, 178, 189-91. On the dashed hopes for a multiparty system, see ibid., pp. 184, 217. As evidence of the Bolsheviks' willingness to share power with other parties, Elleinstein cites Trotsky's remark, "We accept all parties which approve our program." Ibid., p. 153.

[9] Ibid., p. 166.

[10] *Histoire du phénomène . . .*, pp. 32-33, 135-36, 56. Elleinstein also says that Lenin "did not sufficiently see" the implications of a single-party system, a swollen bureaucracy, or such organs as the Cheka for Russia's future—owing to his lack of "sufficient historical experience." Ibid., p. 44.

[11] Procacci's thesis is that the institutional origins of Stalinism are to be found in the militarization of the party brought about by the Civil War. See *Il partito nell'Unione Sovietica, 1917-1945*, pp. 30ff.

[12] See "Politics and Culture in the USSR," in Istituto Gramsci, *Momenti e problemi della storia dell'URSS*, p. 161. See also Strada's introduction to a series of essays by Soviet dissidents in *Dissenso e Socialismo* (Dissent and Socialism), Turin, Einaudi, 1977.

[13] Marisa De Luca, "On the Origins of Stalinism," in *Momenti . . .*, pp. 261, 265.

[14] *L'URSS et nous*, p. 64.

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munists. Elleinstein, in particular, has emerged as an outspoken proponent of more democracy inside the PCF.[15] His analysis of the status of democracy in the USSR is therefore of considerable interest.

As it happens, Elleinstein's understanding of what constitutes democracy in the Soviet Union bears little resemblance to the meaning of the term in the Western liberal tradition. Nowhere in his history of the USSR does Elleinstein specify that a system of strict legal checks on official power, free elections, and a multiparty system are indispensable elements of any political order worthy of the name "democratic." On the contrary, he criticizes the Western concept of liberal democracy as at best "formal" (though he admits that its existence in the West is "precious" all the same).[16] Moreover, he explicitly describes a wide range of Soviet practices as laudably democratic. Thus, he maintains that the Bolshevik party had a "democratic substance" at least until 1920–22, when such events as the Civil War and the Kronstadt uprising required the Bolsheviks to curtail "democratic" tendencies both inside and outside the party.[17] Furthermore, he believes that the Bolsheviks were justified in liquidating the Constituent Assembly in 1918, not only because that body was not "representative" but also in order to prevent it from becoming a source of counterrevolution.[18] At one point in his volume on the "Stalinist phenomenon," Elleinstein criticizes Lenin for failing to realize that democracy necessitates "a structure, an organization, a practice without whose existence contemporary societies can evolve toward totalitarianism"; however, nowhere in this book does he explain what these structures and practices must be, and he certainly does not insist on the desirability of formally institutionalized restrictions on power.[19]

Indeed, a central element of both Elleinstein's and Boffa's accounts of the first decade of Soviet history is their basic disregard of the overwhelming bias in Bolshevik theory against the institutions and attitudinal underpinnings of "bourgeois democracy." Both historians tend to pass over or minimize the deeply rooted *doctrinal* bases of the Bolsheviks' antagonism to such mechanisms as a multiparty system and legal safeguards against abuses of power—an antagonism derived not simply from Russia's autocratic history but also from Marx. At most, they aver that Lenin may have "undervalued" the liberal democratic tradition; they are generally reluctant to observe that both he and Marx flatly *opposed* it. Consequently, both end up ascribing the absence of sufficient "democratic" practices in the USSR to circumstantial factors such as the tenacity of Bolshevism's adversaries.[20]

To be sure, Elleinstein's concept of democracy, at least as it applies to the Soviet Union, can be read in his evaluation of developments in the post-Stalin period. This is highly revealing. For one thing, he asserts that democracy in the USSR can and must come about within the framework of the one-party system.[21] Moreover, he affirms that elements of Soviet political, social, economic, and cultural life have been increasingly "democratized" since the Khrushchev era. Not only, he insists, was "socialist legality" reinstated after 1953,[22] but "fundamental liberties are assuredly real in the Soviet Union" today.[23] While admitting that there is a "certain lack" of "formal liberties" in the USSR, Elleinstein remains convinced that such practices as the suppression of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and other Soviet dissidents are only "marginal" phenomena, at variance with "the profound tendency of the contemporary Sovet Union, which is that of the development of Soviet socialist democracy."[24]

As to the question of "democratic centralism" in the party itself, Elleinstein seems incapable of breaking out of that concept's tortuous ambiguities. While asserting that democratic centralism without democracy leads to dictatorship, he is unwilling to assail the princi-

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[15] Elleinstein joined with other PCF members in writing letters or articles in *Le Monde* which criticized the PCF hierarchy for not reforming its internal structures and doctrines along the lines of the Italian or Spanish Communist parties. See *Le Monde* (Paris), Apr. 13, 14, and 15, 1978. Lately, he has attacked the PCF's endorsement of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Ibid., Jan. 8, 1980.

[16] *Histoire de l'U.R.S.S.*, Vol. IV. *L'U.R.S.S. contemporaine* (The Contemporary USSR), pp. 274–75.

[17] *Histoire du phénomène . . .*, pp. 218, 222.

[18] *Histoire de l'U.R.S.S.*, Vol. I, p. 163. Boffa also approves of the Assembly's dissolution. See *Storia . . .*, Vol. I, pp. 65–66.

[19] *Histoire du phénomène . . .*, p. 223. In his recent book on Trotsky, Elleinstein notes that neither Lenin nor Trotsky accepted "political democracy" or "public liberties" as permanently valid formations, but he insists that Marx did, and that the Bolsheviks' authoritarianism derived in large measure from the exigencies of maintaining power under threatening circumstances. See *Staline-Trotsky*, pp. 44–69.

[20] See *Histoire de l'U.R.S.S.*, Vol. II, *Le socialisme dans un seul pays (1922–1939)* (Socialism in One Country [1922–1939]), pp. 24, 216. Also ibid., Vol. IV, p. 273. For Boffa's views, see *Storia . . .*, Vol. I, p. 161. Elsewhere, Boffa maintains that Lenin in his last years was moving toward "pluralistic" mechanisms in the party leadership, but admits that Lenin never made these tendencies explicit and even denied them. See Boffa and Gilles Martinet, *Dialogo sullo Stalinismo*, pp. 29–32.

[21] *Histoire de l'U.R.S.S.*, Vol. IV, p. 277; *Histoire du phénomene . . .*, p. 244.

[22] *Histoire de l'U.R.S.S.*, Vol. IV, p. 105.

[23] Ibid., p. 301.

[24] Ibid., pp. 173, 265, 302–03.

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ple as such. Ultimately, he falls back on the hackneyed maxim that true democratic centralism requires the right amounts of both democracy and centralism, while avoiding "too much" of either.[25] How the proper balance is to be achieved without institutionalized procedures remains unclear—a problem which obscures Elleinstein's position in relation not only to Soviet history but to his own role as a critic of the PCF leadership.

Boffa is equally aware of the dilemmas of democratic centralism, yet, like Elleinstein, he does not address the question of why the Bolsheviks never adopted more stringent guarantees for assuring "party democracy" beyond the informal tolerance of discussion and debate that normally prevailed under Lenin's aegis. As for democracy outside the confines of the party, Boffa dismisses any prospect for a coalition government even after the crises of 1921 as unrealistic, asserting that, by this time, the "only alternative to Communist power was greater disorder."[26]

The difficulties of defining democracy in the Soviet context are also apparent in the work of a younger Italian Communist scholar, Alberto Ponsi. In *Partito unico e democrazia in URSS,* Ponsi argues that the initial interpretation of Article 141 of the 1936 Soviet Constitution, as advanced by Nikolay Bukharin, would have permitted multiple candidacies in Soviet elections. While Ponsi's study is an amply documented account of resistance to Stalin on the eve of the Great Purge, one wonders how much "democracy" would have been ensured by even the most liberal application of Article 141, inasmuch as Bukharin himself (as Ponsi notes) insisted that the entire election process had to be supervised by the CPSU.

A much more critical analysis of Soviet failures to guarantee political and civil rights may be found in the writings of Umberto Cerroni. At the Gramsci Institute conference on Soviet history, Cerroni squarely attributed the absence of a depoliticized system of "socialist legality" in the USSR to Marxist categories and the rejection of Western liberal theory.[27]

UP TO NOW in our discussion, the similarities between Boffa's and Elleinstein's treatments of Soviet history have been more apparent than their differences. These differences, however, are considerable. Particularly striking are their contrasting interpretations of the Stalin and Khrushchev eras.

Elleinstein's approach, especially in *Histoire de l'U.R.S.S.,* borders on the apologetic. (Indeed, the French historian introduces his lengthy history with the terse notice: "One will not find any anti-Sovietism in this book."[28]) For Elleinstein, Stalin's biggest "crime" was the blood purge of the CPSU. By contrast, the violent collectivization program and the forced-pace industrialization drive, while containing some "mistakes" in their implementation, were essentially correct in their underlying motivations. The suppression of the kulaks was "an absolute necessity" designed to eliminate a "threatening force."[29] Elleinstein's account of the collectivization campaign grossly minimizes the extent of Soviet violence applied to peasants of all classes and refers weakly to the opposition of "an important part of the peasantry" in characterizing peasant resistance. Similarly, Elleinstein argues that the rigors of rapid industrialization were fully understandable in view of the "danger" posed by the West to the Soviet regime.[30] Incredibly, Elleinstein closes his examination of the 1930's with an approving reference to Stalin's notorious remark, "Life is easier, life is happier." "In spite of everything," Elleinstein concludes, "this was true."[31]

Against these polemical effusions, Boffa offers a much more critical and balanced presentation of Stalin's first two five-year plans. His interpretation is informed by a conviction that there existed practicable alternatives to Stalin's violence against the peasantry. Boffa strongly endorses Bukharin's vision of a continuing truce between the party and the peasants within the framework of the New Economic Policy (NEP) and nonviolent incentives to collectivize.[32] (Elleinstein, in contrast, is far less favorably inclined toward Bukharin's views and faults his tendency "to lean too far to the right."[33])

An even more forceful indictment of the collectivization campaign is Fabbio Bettanin's *La collettivizzazione delle campagne nell'URSS.* This painstakingly researched volume by a young scholar presents a stark picture of Soviet violence and peasant resistance, and it actually considers the economic *dis*advantages to the regime occasioned by the destruction of the kulaks. Borrowing terminology from Antonio Gramsci, the au-

[25] *Histoire du phénomène . . .*, pp. 218, 33.
[26] *Storia . . .*, Vol. I, p. 189.
[27] "Politics and Legality in the Soviet Experience," in *Momenti . . .*, pp. 61–78. For another critical study of "socialist legality" in the USSR, see "Revolutionary Legality in the USSR from 1932 to 1934," in S. Bertolissi et al., *Studi di storia sovietica,* pp. 252–71.
[28] *Histoire de l'U.R.S.S.,* Vol. I, pp. 8–9.
[29] Ibid., Vol. II, p. 170.
[30] Ibid., Vol. II, p. 182.
[31] Ibid., p. 273.
[32] *Storia . . .*, Vol. I, pp. 337–57.
[33] *Histoire du phénomène . . .*, pp. 78–79.

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thor concludes that the Soviets should have opted for a long-term "war of position" in the countryside, based on popular consent, instead of unleashing an all-out "war of movement."[34]

Bukharin is not the only Soviet figure to be given contrasting portraits by the two leading French and Italian Communist historians. Trotsky likewise evokes controversy. Elleinstein in his four-volume history tends to gloss over Trotsky's heroics during the October Revolution and the Civil War and accuses him of opposing "Bolshevism" from 1923 on.[35] Only in his more recent work, *Staline-Trotsky,* does Elleinstein restore Trotsky to his rightful place as the second most prominent Bolshevik until his demise under Stalin. Trotsky gains a more consistently sympathetic hearing from Boffa and from Anna Di Biagio in a study published by the PCI press.[36]

As to the Khrushchev years, Elleinstein places much more emphasis on the "democratization" of the USSR under Khrushchev than does Boffa. For Boffa, Khrushchev was more the "stabilizer of the Stalinist system" than its "authentic reformer."[37]

An additional area of contrasts between Boffa and Elleinstein is Soviet foreign policy. To cite just two examples, the historians differ in their appreciation of the role of nationalism in Stalin's policies and in their analysis of the cold war. Elleinstein explicitly de-emphasizes the importance of nationalism in Soviet wartime propaganda at home and attributes the establishment of Soviet-style regimes in Eastern Europe after the war primarily to "multiform revolutionary processes founded on the mass movement and the class struggle."[38] The outbreak of the cold war itself, he maintains, was the "fundamental responsibility" of the United States, which he accuses of violating the Yalta and Potsdam agreements, threatening war against a prostrate Soviet Union, and instigating the Korean war. Although Elleinstein concedes that Stalin may have committed "grave mistakes" in Eastern Europe, he suggests that "one cannot reduce the history of these countries only to these elements."[39] Boffa is considerably more sensitive to the prominence of nationalism in Stalin's policy.[40] Moreover, Boffa's assessment of the origins of the cold war, though essentially anti-Western, is a bit less one-sided than Elleinstein's. While he holds the United States basically responsible for starting the conflict, he takes Stalin to task for pursuing a spheres-of-influence policy in Europe. As a consequence of the attitudes of both sides, according to Boffa, the cold war division of the continent was "inevitable." In addition, Boffa roundly condemns Stalin for blocking the development of "national roads to socialism" in Eastern Europe, an action which Boffa argues only "aggravated" Europe's division.[41]

THE QUESTION of whether, or to what extent, the Soviet Union is a socialist country has assumed pressing actuality for the Eurocommunists ever since Santiago Carrillo, head of the Spanish Communist Party (PCE), emphatically denied that the Soviet system is socialist in his book *"Eurocommunism" and the State.*[42] The authors surveyed in this essay vary in their response to this fundamental question, and their general evaluation of the relevance of the Soviet model for other societies, particularly in the area of economics, likewise reflects some interesting nuances.

Predictably, Elleinstein is the most straightforward in asserting that "socialism has become a reality" in the USSR. This view is in keeping with his overall characterization of Soviet history as an "optimistic tragedy."[43] Even the authors of *L'URSS et nous* describe the USSR as a socialist society, though they judge it a form of "authoritarian socialism" having little in common with the "democratic socialism" espoused by the PCF.[44]

Boffa is more reserved. He says that the socialist character of the USSR by the end of the 1930's was "debatable," and affirms that, while one cannot "expel" the Soviet experience from the history of socialism, Stalin's claim that the USSR is a manifestation of "real socialism" is "mortifying for anyone who nourishes socialist convictions." This is so because, in

[34] See *La collettivizzazione . . .*, pp. 256ff. Additional works on the Stalin period worth mentioning here are Guido Ortona's *La questione agraria in URSS negli anni Venti* and Rita Di Leo's *Il modello di Stalin.* Ortona argues rather convincingly that elements of Stalin's system can be found in the implementation of NEP, as local party functionaries increasingly came to exercise more economic control functions than initially anticipated. Di Leo, whose views on a variety of subjects led to her expulsion from the Italian Communist Party (PCI), makes the argument that Stalin's preference for political goals over economic "laws" reversed Lenin's priorities and was a true manifestation of the "dictatorship of the proletariat."

[35] *Histoire de l'U.R.S.S.*, Vol. II, p. 39.

[36] "The Last Battle of the Opposition," in Bertolissi et al., pp. 89–223.

[37] *Storia . . .*, Vol. II, pp. 585–604, 636–40.

[38] *Histoire de l'U.R.S.S.*, Vol. III, pp. 164–67; Vol. IV, p. 16.

[39] Ibid., Vol. IV, pp. 7–32.

[40] *Storia . . .*, Vol. II, pp. 188–90, 205, 291. See also Boffa's "The National Component and the Socialist Component in the Russian Revolution and in Soviet Experience," in *Momenti . . .*, pp. 15–32.

[41] *Storia . . .*, Vol. II, pp. 305–06, 25–57, 318, 434–35, 356.

[42] *"Eurocomunism" y Estado,* Barcelona, Editorial Crítica, 1977.

[43] *Histoire de l'U.R.S.S.*, Vol. I, pp. 8–9.

[44] *L'URSS et nous,* pp. 213, 218.

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Boffa's view, socialism requires "civil liberties" and "political democracy." Indeed, he holds that such things are indispensable components of the socialist tradition.[45]

Of the writers treated here, it is Vittorio Strada who is the most unequivocal in stating that the USSR is not a socialist society. Like Boffa, Strada regards "freedom of information and discussion" as intrinsic elements of real socialism.[46] Other speakers at the Gramsci Institute's conference offered more elliptical comments regarding the "problematic" nature of Soviet socialism.[47]

If there is any unanimity among the writers just examined, it is in their insistence that the Soviet Union does not constitute a model worthy of emulation by the PCF or the PCI. This position has long been articulated by these parties in light of their commitment to the "democratic path" to socialism. However, many of the works analyzed here also criticize the Soviet economic system, with varying degrees of severity. One Italian analyst affirms that the Soviet experience indicates that a planned economy "is no less anarchic than the market,"[48] and one of the contributors to *L'URSS et nous* calls for a system of Soviet "self-management" *(autogestion)*.[49]

Even Elleinstein, whose sketch of Soviet economic failures is spotty, concludes that the superiority of socialism over capitalism is at best "abstract" and is not something that can be measured in economic statistics.[50]

IN SUM, the histories of the USSR written by Italian and French Communists in recent years constitute the most thorough and studied critiques of the Soviet experience yet produced by West European Communists. Virtually every major aspect of Soviet life in the political, economic, and cultural spheres has been subjected to critical, at times trenchant, analysis. This is especially the case for the Stalin and Khrushchev periods.

It is the Leninist heritage, however, which remains the most problematic element for the Eurocommunist historians. In particular, the linkage between Leninism and Stalinism creates the knottiest ambiguities and inconsistencies in their writings and underlies the deepest divisions in their judgments. Granted that Stalin's brutality and dictatorial power vastly exceeded Lenin's, can it be said that Leninism had no connection at all with what followed? Not even the most pro-Soviet of the writers examined here seem willing to go this far, but clearly there is a deep reluctance to implicate Lenin in any way in the deeds of Stalin. Another problem is that, whereas Russia's autocratic history may help explain why Lenin's brand of socialism was authoritarian, it does not explain why *West European* Communists, including historians of the USSR conscious of their own countries' liberal traditions, continue to venerate Lenin's thought and actions.

The matter is further complicated by the question of "democracy" in the USSR. The insistence on the part of most of the Eurocommunist historians that elements of "democracy" and "socialist legality" were present in Lenin's period (and, for some, even in Khrushchev's) does little to clarify what the Eurocommunists ultimately mean by these terms as they apply to socialist systems. This issue is of more than academic interest. In fact, although the Eurocommunist parties have repeatedly sworn their commitment to liberal democracy while traversing the "path to socialism," the prospect for the survival of parliamentary democracy once "socialism" has been installed is still an open question. The writings of the majority of the historians treated here do not resolve the matter. On the contrary, the ease with which Elleinstein and Boffa rationalize Bolshevik violence "in defense of the revolution" only heightens the uncertainties in the Eurocommunists' vision of democracy in socialist society.

[45] *Storia* . . . , Vol. I, p. 654; Vol. II, pp. 652–55.

[46] *Momenti* . . . , p. 162.

[47] See Luciano Gruppi, "The Unexpressed Potentialities of October," in ibid., p. 188; and Cerroni's remarks in ibid., p. 387.

[48] Mario Ferrero, "Notes on the Theory of Socialist Planning: Utopia and Reality," in ibid., pp. 211, 213. In the same volume, see also the essays by Carlo Buffino (pp. 139–55) and Marco Buttino (pp. 335–39).

[49] *L'URSS et nous*, pp. 122, 126.

[50] *Histoire du phénomène* . . . , p. 191.

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Perspectives on the Sino-Soviet Conflict

By Harold C. Hinton

GEORGE GINSBURGS and CARL F. PINKELE. *The Sino-Soviet Territorial Dispute, 1949–64.* New York, NY, Praeger, 1978.

MORRIS ROTHENBERG. *Whither China: The View from the Kremlin.* Coral Gables, FL, Center for Advanced International Studies, University of Miami, 1977.

C. L. SULZBERGER. *The Coldest War: Russia's Game in China.* New York, NY, and London, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974.

DREW MIDDLETON. *The Duel of the Giants.* New York, NY, Scribner's, 1978.

VICTOR LOUIS. *The Coming Decline of the Chinese Empire.* New York, NY, Times Books, 1979.

E. STUART KIRBY. *Russian Studies of China: Progress and Problems of Soviet Sinology.* Totowa, NJ, Rowman and Littlefield, 1976.

AS THE REVIEWER pointed out in these pages nearly a decade ago,[1] Sino-Soviet relations are capable of following any of several paths, even some form of armed conflict. Since there are powerful disincentives to the exercise of this last option by either side, however, the confrontation between Moscow and Beijing has been conducted so far in a somewhat less violent and essentially political way.

In describing the pattern of relations between Moscow and Beijing in the 1970's, it is useful to evoke the example of Beijing-Hanoi relations since early 1979, for the two confrontations exhibit striking parallels. In the latter relationship, China, having assessed the highly imperfect success of the "lesson" that it tried to teach Vietnam in February-March 1979, has apparently settled down, at least for the time being, to a strategy aimed at keeping Hanoi tense and off balance, complicating its development program, and if possible distracting and deterring it from further "expansion," by means just short of further military pressure. (While a reescalation of the process to the level of violence cannot be excluded, as of the spring of 1980 there had been no signs of another Chinese military buildup along the Vietnamese frontier like the one that preceded the "lesson.") Whether by coincidence or not, this strategy closely resembles the one that China's colossus to the north, the Soviet "polar bear," has employed against China since the 1960's. There is the same reduction of trade, termination of aid, and polemical broadsides; the same exaggerated sensitivity to historic and previously latent territorial claims by the weaker party; the same military buildup in the border region, efforts to isolate the target adversary diplomatically, and promotion of dissidence and subversion (especially in ethnic minority areas) through covert means.

Moreover, in each case, one of the main results has been to drive the weaker state more or less into the arms of the stronger party's main adversary: the Soviet Union with respect to the Sino-Vietnamese confrontation, the United States with respect to the Soviet-Chinese confrontation. In each case, too, there have been political talks between the parties, but because of the bitterness on both sides, these have tended to degenerate into snarling matches. Such was true in the new round of Soviet-Chinese talks initiated in 1979. The talks came about after Beijing, on May 5, called for negotiations without preconditions.[2] Previously, the Chinese had insisted on prior "mutual" withdrawal (actually a Soviet withdrawal, since China did not occupy any signifi-

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[1] "Conflict on the Ussuri: A Clash of Nationalisms," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), January–April 1971, pp. 45–61.

[2] *The Christian Science Monitor* (Boston, MA), May 16, 1979.

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cant areas claimed by the USSR) of troops from "disputed" areas (Moscow, at least in public, heatedly denies the existence of any "disputed areas").

This concession apparently reflected Beijing's alarm at Moscow's hostile reaction to such recent developments as the PRC's drive toward industrialization; Hua Guofeng's demand (on February 26, 1978, at the Fifth National People's Congress) for a drastic reduction of Soviet forces along the whole of the Sino-Soviet border; the normalization of Sino-American relations; China's attack on Vietnam; and Beijing's abrogation in April 1979 of the Sino-Soviet alliance of 1950. The danger signal to Beijing seems to have been the inclusion in the Soviet May Day parade in 1979, for the first time since 1968, of a large military (nuclear as well as conventional) component. In 1969, participation by the military had been canceled on short notice, partly as a means of conveying a soothing signal to Beijing at a time of great tension over the Sino-Soviet border, and reintroduction of a military component in the 1979 parade seemed to indicate an ugly and dangerous mood in Moscow.

However, there is no convincing reason to believe that negotiations are capable of resolving the serious issues and bitter antagonism between Moscow and Beijing in the near term. China, as the weaker party, resents the bullying to which the Soviet Union has subjected it since 1969 and fears, probably with good reason, that a true accommodation with Moscow would have to be on Soviet terms, which Beijing thinks involve an unacceptable semisatellite status for China. Moscow, for its part, seems to distrust Beijing so profoundly and to be so infected with "great nation chauvinism" (to use a Chinese phrase) that it would be content with nothing less than such a status for China. Without it, Moscow is virtually certain to maintain its threatening and humiliating (to the Chinese side) military presence along the Sino-Soviet border. Hence, it came as little surprise that the new round of talks achieved no observable results and was suspended by Beijing in January 1980, with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as the pretext.[3]

The main qualification to this bleak outlook is that Moscow claims to believe that the more or less "socialist" nature of the Chinese economy will seriously complicate China's dealings with the non-"socialist" West and Japan and will ultimately lead Beijing to cultivate closer economic ties with the Soviet Union instead.[4] Moscow seems to imply a willingness to be generous under these conditions, if China is willing to pay the political price noted above. But, while there appear to be some Chinese who would like to increase trade with and perhaps seek aid from the Soviet Union,[5] they probably would not do so at the cost of abandoning either economic relations with the non-"socialist" countries or the political struggle against Soviet "hegemonism." There may be others in the PRC (among the military leadership, it is thought by some[6]) who would like to improve relations with Moscow for the sake not only of lowering the risk of war but also of acquiring military equipment, especially if the US persists in its current reluctance to sell weapons to China. However, the existence of such a viewpoint in China is highly speculative.

BECAUSE of its obvious importance and interest, the Sino-Soviet dispute has evoked a huge journalistic and scholarly literature in other countries since bursting on the world's consciousness toward the end of the 1950's. Some of this analysis has been of very high quality, an excellent example being Donald S. Zagoria's classic, *The Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956–1961*.[7] For various reasons, however, many books on the Sino-Soviet dispute suffer from one or more of the following defects: they rehearse well-known facts for the "n"th time, without adding anything new; they concentrate on relative superficialities, such as propaganda polemics (which sometimes masquerade under the guise of scholarship), without going in depth into the real issues (inferable more from behavior than from statements) and the actual conduct of the dispute; they are more or less outdated by the time of publication or soon afterward (an inevitable occupational disease of much contemporary book publishing); they concentrate on a particular aspect, possibly minor, of the dispute and thus shed little light on the phenomenon as a whole, as it needs to be seen; or they are written from the viewpoint, or even in the cause, of one or the other of the adversaries and thus suffer from some degree of conscious or unconscious bias. The books under review range from the scholarly to the journalistic, even propagandistic, and among them we find samples of all these shortcomings.

[3] New China News Agency (Beijing), Jan. 20, 1980.

[4] Statements to this effect have been made to the author and other analysts by Soviet officials.

[5] For example, Cheng Liu, "Sino-Soviet Relations Should Be Thawed," *Cheng Ming* (Hong Kong), May 1, 1979.

[6] For example, Franz Michael, "China and the Soviet Union: Waiting for Mao to Die?" *Current History* (Philadelphia, PA), September 1975, p. 104.

[7] 3rd ed., New York, NY, Octagon Books, 1979.

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For example, George Ginsburgs and Carl F. Pinkele's analysis of the 1949–64 phase of the Sino-Soviet border dispute is useful background for understanding the flare-up of this matter in 1969, which to a large extent triggered the sharp deterioration in the relations between the two countries in recent years. However, this generally competent work relies largely on Soviet sources and does not quite do analytic justice to the Chinese side. The authors perceive China as motivated by a nationalism that has turned increasingly against the Soviet Union since the early 1950's and has found the territorial dispute a moving and effective issue. This is true, but it is not the whole story. Ideology, in the form of sinicized Marxism-Leninism, or Maoism, also played an important role. The late Chinese Defense Minister Lin Biao, a militant Maoist, seriously exacerbated the situation along the Sino-Soviet border from the time of his appointment in 1959 until the Chinese ambush of a Soviet patrol on the Ussuri River on March 2, 1969, mainly because he felt and wanted to demonstrate a strong contempt for the "revisionist" paper bear on the other side of the border.[8]

Soviet policy toward and propaganda about China down to the end of 1976 (shortly after the death of Mao Zedong) is the subject of Morris Rothenberg's useful analysis. He shows very well how seriously the USSR takes its China problem in both its current and possible future aspects—above all, Beijing's efforts to form an anti-Soviet combination of some sort with the United States and Japan. This Soviet apprehension has existed for a long time, but is only now widely understood. (Indeed, it was astonishing to the reviewer, in the late 1950's and the early 1960's, how slow Western sovietologists were to understand the grave concern Beijing was already then causing Moscow.)

In a more journalistic vein, an eminent correspondent of *The New York Times,* C.L. Sulzberger, surveys the history of the Chinese Communist revolution and the basic cultural, historical, and political reasons why its leaders eventually broke with their Soviet mentors. From the vantage point of late 1973, Sulzberger predicted that the Soviet Union would confine itself to pressures short, although only just short, of war in its efforts to bring China back into line. To date, of course, this line of analysis has proved to be generally correct.

Drew Middleton, another correspondent of *The New York Times,* has provided us a somewhat more recent and more solid piece of journalism on the Sino-Soviet confrontation. A military specialist who has written a series of firsthand reports on the Chinese People's Liberation Army, Middleton devotes much of his book to the military aspect of the problem. His highly sensible conclusion reminds us that although a Sino-Soviet war is not probable in the near future, it is not "unthinkable."

And then we come to the work of the well-known Soviet "journalist"—more accurately, intelligence agent and propagandist—Victor Louis. His is the most controversial and best known of the books under review.[9] Like a China-watching Andrey Amal'rik, Louis asserts that the Chinese are so hated by the ethnic minorities they have oppressed for centuries that the "breakup" of China, possibly assisted by some sort of Soviet incursion, is a definite possibility. The main purpose of this line of argument is probably to discourage Beijing from going too far against Hanoi. In reality, the Soviets are making some efforts to promote dissidence among the minorities in China,[10] but—in spite of the Dalai Lama's visit to Moscow and to Ulan Bator in June 1979—there is no evidence that they have had any significant successes along these lines.

A valuable antidote to some of the errors and exaggerations in Louis's polemic is the "dissenting introduction" to the book, written by Harrison Salisbury (yet another correspondent of *The New York Times).* Such introductions are a good idea, for they may deter authors, more or less hardened to critical reviewers, from some of their excesses.

AN IMPORTANT element in any attempt to analyze the Sino-Soviet conflict is an understanding of China. However, the art of China-watching (the contemporary equivalent of traditional sinology) is practiced with varying success in different quarters. In the West, where all is merry chaos, the cumulative results of the large investment of money and manpower in this endeavor since World War II, especially in the United States, have nevertheless been impressive, if uneven.

When we come to Soviet China-watchers, we discover more problems. As E. Stuart Kirby—a British scholar well informed on both the Far East and the Soviet Union—

[8] The case for Lin Biao as the originator of the clash is developed in Harold C. Hinton, *The Sino-Soviet Confrontation: Implications for the Future,* New York, NY, Crane, Russak, 1976, pp. 16–17.

[9] For example, it evoked a full-page, highly critical, commentary in *Time* (New York, NY), May 28, 1979.

[10] On Soviet propaganda to and about the minorities in China, see Harrison E. Salisbury, *War Between Russia and China,* New York, NY, Bantam Books, 1970, pp. 160–61.

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observes in his study of Soviet sinology, the deterioration in relations between the USSR and China in recent years has compounded distortions introduced by Marxist-Leninist ideology and by ethnic prejudice to weaken the contributions of otherwise quite knowledgeable Soviet scholarship on China.

But this is not the whole story. Indeed, the Soviet party and government apparatuses and the semiofficial research institutes under the USSR Academy of Sciences (for example, the Institute of the Far East) have a substantial number of very able individuals who know China and its language well and in many cases have had recent experience in China. When speaking privately, these specialists can be very objective both about China and about the West's China-watching, which they respect. The problem is that they are not truly free intelligences when they write for publication or address foreign audiences at international conferences and the like. In such contexts, they must and do purvey essentially the party line, which amounts largely to bitterly anti-Chinese (and of course strongly pro-Soviet) propaganda. In recent years, the Soviets have made some energetic efforts in this direction among some Western China-watchers.[11]

But one should remember that such public behavior by Soviet China-watchers reflects political, not intellectual, factors. It remains to be determined how the more objective analysis going on out of the limelight views the Sino-Soviet conflict and how much such perceptions affect the actual course of that conflict.

[11] A favorite Soviet ploy has been to convey to invited Western China-watchers, supposedly in confidence, a self-serving and very likely fictitious version of the Soviet relationship to the Taiwan Strait crisis of 1958. A reference to one such interview may be found in A. Doak Barnett, *China and the Major Powers in East Asia*, Washington, DC, The Brookings Institution, 1977, p. 36n.

The Party and the Gun in China

By Paul H.B. Godwin

HARVEY W. NELSEN. *The Chinese Military System: An Organizational Study of the Chinese People's Liberation Army*. Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 1977.

LIVIO MAITAN. *Party, Army and Masses in China: A Marxist Interpretation of the Cultural Revolution and Its Aftermath*. London, New Left Books, 1976.

THE ROLE of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in the Chinese polity was of critical importance in the post-Cultural Revolution period and even after the death of Lin Biao in 1971, when the explicitly political content of the Chinese military ethic and the past behavior of the PLA gave rise to questions about the role the PLA might play after Mao Zedong's death.[1] Today, questions about the PLA's current and future role continue to be asked, if not with the urgency of earlier years. The PLA still has a strong tradition of political participation, a tradition dating from the PLA's origins in 1927 and nurtured by 22 years of "people's war." Moreover, the military system of the People's Republic of China (PRC) preserves no clear line between the party hierarchy and military hierarchy, so that military officers and soldiers at various levels perform ostensibly "civilian" functions in such realms as policy-making and party control of the military establishment. As a result, PLA involvement in politics has been considerable. And if severe intraparty disputes were to occur, such as occurred during the Cultural Revolution, the PLA might again play an even more significant political role.

It is precisely recognition of the current and potential political role of the PLA that has rekindled Western scholarly interest in the PLA. In the post-1954 period, it was widely believed that the PLA had but minimal influence on critical policy issues, and Western

[1] Throughout the following discussion, the entire military organization of China will be referred to as the People's Liberation Army.

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scholars showed little interest in the PLA, even to the point of neglect.[2] In the mid-1960's, works by Ellis Joffe, Alexander George, John Gittings, and Samuel Griffith provided the essential scholarly underpinnings for the subsequent growth of interest connected with the events of the Cultural Revolution.[3] In the early 1970's, when it had become evident that the PLA was indeed to play a significant role in Chinese politics and when the alleged coup plot by Lin Biao was followed in short order by a purge of the Chinese high command, a veritable flood of Western publications issued forth. Since then, one of the primary quests of Western scholars has been to determine the PLA's precise role in the Chinese polity.

Renewed Western interest in the PLA has brought a plethora of conceptualizations. Most have emphasized the uniqueness of the PRC's experience with its military establishment,[4] and until recently, little interest has been shown in a more comparative approach.[5] However, in 1978, Dale Herspring and Ivan Volgyes organized and contributed to symposia designed to initiate the comparative analysis of civil-military relations in Communist systems.[6] Then, in the spring of 1979, Andrzej Korbonski and Roman Kolkowicz, both of the Center for International and Strategic Affairs at the University of California at Los Angeles, organized a conference on "Civil-Military Relations in Socialist and Modernizing Societies," the outcome of which will be a volume that presents both studies of particular cases and studies of the broader comparative and theoretical problems of the military in society. This recent trend indicates that, in the area of civil-military relations at least, the study of Communist systems in isolation from the general field of comparative politics is coming to an end. In the 1980's, Western scholars will thereby be better equipped to evaluate such complex phenomena as the Chinese military system.

NEITHER OF the two works reviewed here is specifically oriented toward the broader issues of comparative analysis, but each adds to our growing pool of analysis of the political role played by the PLA. Harvey W. Nelsen sought to pick up where Gittings and Griffith left off—on the eve of the Cultural Revolution. His approach differs from that of his predecessors in that he chose not to organize his research around a continuous chronological record. Rather, he elected to follow the path charted by Franz Schurmann and A. Doak Barnett, that of preparing an analysis of organizational behavior.[7] Thus, he presents a detailed description of the structure and function of the Chinese military establishment, the role it played in the Cultural Revolution, and the impact its behavior had on the Chinese military system in the post-Cultural Revolution period.

The general character of Livio Maitan's work, originally published in Italy in 1969 and revised and updated for the 1976 English edition, is made clear in the book's subtitle, *A Marxist Interpretation of the Cultural Revolution and Its Aftermath*. Maitan, a member of the Fourth International, views the Cultural Revolution as an expression of the conflict between the democracy sought by the masses through the Cultural Revolution and Mao Zedong's attempt to limit the Cultural Revolution to a reform of the bureaucracy. For this essay, we shall restrict our observations on Maitan primarily to his analysis of the political role of the Chinese military establishment.

Central to Maitan's argument is the proposition that the Cultural Revolution was a process of "reorganization and reform" designed to restore Mao's particular conceptualization of the goals of the Chinese revolution and to oust party officials who opposed his views (p. 144). This argument does not require the support of a Marxist interpretation. Rather, Maitan's Marxist orientation is to be found in his particular normative view, which seeks to judge Chinese communism against its self-proclaimed commitment to Marxism-Leninism. However, Maitan is by no means inimical to the Chinese Communist movement; he explains the "contradictions" in Chinese society and leadership as

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[2] See Jonathan Pollack, "The Study of Chinese Military Politics: Toward a Framework for Analysis," in Catherine Kelleher, Ed., *Political-Military Systems: Comparative Perspectives*, Beverly Hills, CA, Sage Publications, 1974, pp. 239–70.

[3] Ellis Joffe, *Party and Army: Professionalism and Political Control in the Chinese Officer Corps, 1949–1964*. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1965; Alexander George, *The Chinese Communist Army in Action*, New York, NY, Columbia University Press, 1967; John Gittings, *The Role of the Chinese Army*, New York, NY, Oxford University Press, 1967; Samuel B. Griffith II, *The Chinese People's Liberation Army*, New York, NY, McGraw-Hill, 1967.

[4] See Pollack, loc. cit.; and Paul H.B. Godwin, "The Armed Forces of the PRC: Time for a New Perspective," *Armed Forces and Society* (Chicago, IL), Fall 1978, pp. 145–54.

[5] Pollack, loc. cit.; and Godwin, loc cit.

[6] Dale R. Herspring and Ivan Volgyes, Eds., *Civil-Military Relations in Communist Systems*, Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 1978; Dale R. Herspring, Special Issue Co-Editor, "Civil-Military Relations in Communist Countries: First Steps Toward Theory," *Studies in Comparative Communism* (Los Angeles, CA), Autumn 1978.

[7] Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*, Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 1966; A. Doak Barnett, *Cadres, Bureaucracy, and Political Power in Communist China*, New York, NY, Columbia University Press, 1967.

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a function of the transitional stage between capitalism and communism and the Stalinist nature of the Chinese political system. Maitan's analysis focuses on the creation of a dominant political elite modeled on Stalinist principles of leadership and organization (in classical Trotskyist form, V.I. Lenin is absolved from any contribution to Stalinism), an elite that exercises its power through layers of bureaucracy. As Maitan explains it, the Chinese variant of the Stalinist model emerged in part because in the early stages of the revolution the Maoists sought not the overthrow of capitalism but the establishment of a "New Democracy." A democratic structure controlled by the workers and peasants did not take shape, and the apparatus of the party and state grew apart from the masses. When critical factional splits occurred in the party center and Mao turned to the students and workers to expunge the apparatus of heretics, the new revolutionaries used the Cultural Revolution to express their demands for democracy. The Maoists sought to control these aspirations, permitting "power seizures" only at the lower levels of the apparatus while real political power remained in the hands of an increasingly smaller circle of the political elite. According to Maitan, the Cultural Revolution resulted in very little change, and the system quickly returned to one in which a political/bureaucratic layer dominates the masses and in which no real democratic power is delegated to the workers and peasants.

Non-Marxist analysts of the Chinese polity did not, and do not, anticipate the kinds of changes Maitan hoped for. Rather, they see political behavior such as the recent demise of Democracy Wall as far more characteristic of Marxist-Leninist systems. Furthermore, whereas Maitan was dismayed by Deng Xiaoping's first return to high office in 1973 and would be even more dismayed by the wholesale restoration of the bureaucrats under Deng and Hua Guofeng since Mao's death, non-Marxist analysts in the West generally applaud the reintroduction of relative pragmatists and pragmatism into the mainstream of Chinese politics.

Where non-Marxist analysts are not likely to disagree with Maitan is in his careful analysis of elite politics. Both Maitan and Nelsen explore the problems faced by the military establishment as the conflict between the goals of the Maoists and the more conservative values of the civilian and military bureaucracies enmeshed the military more and more in politics and ultimately created a triangular pattern of interaction between the Maoists, the party bureaucracy, and the PLA. Although the officer corps as a whole was more in accord with the conservative values of the party bureaucracy brought under attack by the Cultural Revolution Group, it too had its complement of Maoists. Hence, PLA involvement in the Cultural Revolution and in post-Cultural Revolution politics sometimes presents a confused picture. Here, Nelsen's discrete analysis of, first, the organization of the military establishment and, second, the kind of interaction with politics created by the structure and function of the military establishment permits him to assess the role of the PLA in these processes with great clarity.

WHAT KIND of party-military relations emerged from the party's experience with the military establishment between 1965 and 1973? Until the late 1960's, it was widely believed that party control of the military establishment was assured by a separate and highly centralized control apparatus, consisting primarily of the Central Military Commission (CMC) of the party Central Committee, the PLA's own General Political Department (GPD), and the GPD's extensive and hierarchical network of political commissars, political officers, political departments, and party committees. As Nelsen observes (p. 53), however, this control system failed to prevent breaches of discipline by the Regional Forces during the Cultural Revolution and failed to prevent the organization of a military coup by Lin Biao and his supporters.[8] The analyses of both Nelsen and Maitan clearly indicate that the GPD, rather than mirroring the goals and values of the civilian party leadership, may well have reflected essentially the goals and values of the military party leadership. Thus, earlier Western models of party-military relations in the PRC, in assuming civilian party domination of the PLA, may well have been in error.

In such circumstances, analyses of party-military relations in the PRC must go back to the rather obvious proposition that the level of PLA involvement in politics is directly proportional to the intensity of intraparty disputes. The more intense such disputes are, the greater the likelihood of conditions in which the party network of controls may not work as intended.

Furthermore, regardless of Mao's 1938 dictum that "the Party commands the gun, and the gun must never be allowed to command the Party," the boundary between the military hierarchy and the civilian

[8] Organizationally, the PRC's armed forces are divided into Main Forces (which include the navy and air force) and Regional Forces. The Main Forces are designed to operate in any area of the PRC whenever necessary, and the Regional Forces are supposed to concentrate on defending their own localities.

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party hierarchy has been quite porous—porous because of the historical relationship between the party and the army and porous because party membership cuts across all functional hierarchies in Chinese society. During the Cultural Revolution, the repercussions of this porousness were felt at both the national and provincial levels.

At the national level, the placement of career soldiers on the Politburo became "institutionalized," which in turn gave rise to a considerable blurring of roles between military party members and civilian party members in the processes of national policymaking. The result was an interlocking structure made up of civilian party leaders and senior military officials who, as party members, serve together with their colleagues from the civilian party apparatus. With such an arrangement, the political involvement of senior military officials is to be expected.

Below the level of the Politburo, the Central Military Commission functioned not as a body responsible to the Central Committee but as the Politburo's staff office for military affairs. Moreover, it was composed almost entirely of career soldiers. Formally, its chairman was Mao Zedong (and is now Hua Guofeng). Actually, its de facto chairman, normally the first vice-chairman, was Lin Biao (and is now Xu Xiangqian). At this level, then, only the rarely mentioned Control Group of the CMC, which may have a veto function, seems to have represented "civilian" interests (Nelsen, p. 47). Thus, even though the CMC was in theory a party institution that reported to the Central Committee, it appears in practice to have been a military party organization that reported to the Politburo, which itself contained a number of representatives of the military establishment, most of whom were also members of the CMC.

Below the CMC, the General Political Department was supposed to have been the heart of the party control apparatus in the PLA, but it by no means engaged in clearly defined civilian party interaction with the PLA. Its political commissars and political officers were soldiers, and its political departments (and the party committees as well) were composed of soldiers—with the single exception of political commissars appointed from the ranks of the provincial party secretaries (or from the regional party bureaus when they existed) to the military region and military district commands of the Regional Forces.

At the top, then, neither the Politburo, nor the CMC, nor the GPD preserved a clear dividing line between civilian and military. In fact, as the GPD's organizational structure, membership, and relationship to the central party apparatus indicate, the PLA was privileged to operate its own party system and its own system of political work.

Thus, when the Cultural Revolution began, the PLA had its own separate campaign, run by He Long, a vice-chairman of the CMC, with the assistance of Liu Zhijian, a deputy director of the GPD (Nelsen, p. 75). (This pattern conformed to the PLA's preferred style of political work.) Furthermore, a deputy director of the GPD, Liang Biye, attempted (Nelsen, p. 103) to protect the military preparedness of the PLA from the political impact of the Cultural Revolution (he was subsequently purged for his efforts). In fact, because the GPD initially so dragged its feet in carrying out the Cultural Revolution in the army, in August 1967 its operations were temporarily suspended, and its director, Xiao Hua, was

Reviewers in This Issue

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dismissed (Nelsen, pp. 104–05).

At the provincial level, both Nelsen and Maitan conclude, the Regional Forces tended to support the more conservative Red Guard organizations. Maitan's explanation of this behavior emphasizes, first, the interaction of the Regional Forces with the provincial party and state apparatus after 1959–60, when the GPD in the provinces was reorganized so that senior provincial party secretaries were appointed first political commissars of the military region and military district commands of the Regional Forces, and, second, the essentially conservative bias of military institutions, regardless of the PLA's revolutionary background (p. 182). Nelsen's explanation parallels Maitan's, adding the interesting fact that some provincial party leaders argued that the Regional Forces were "not a part of the national defense army, and that its [provincial military district] task was mainly concerned with the localities and its principal leadership was the provincial Party committee" (p. 32). Here, the interaction of the regional PLA units with the senior provincial party secretaries, who played a dual civil-military role, led to an unwillingness to support the more radical Red Guard organizations. The deviation of the Regional Forces from the goals of the Maoists brought restrictions on the authority of local military commanders, the transfer and suspension of a number of these commanders, and the dispatch of Main Force units (which are under the direct command of the CMC and the Ministry of National Defense) to correct the political errors of the Regional Forces (Nelsen, pp. 34–35).

Of exceptional interest in Nelsen's and Maitan's books, in sum, is what the behavior of the PLA during the Cultural Revolution tells us about the Chinese military system. First, it appears that the GPD was a creature of the PLA, not a pliant tool by which the civilian party apparatus assured that the party controls the gun. Second, as is described in Nelsen's analysis of the structure and function of the Chinese force deployments in peacetime, the Regional Forces were more responsive to local political interests than to central directives in an era of intense intraparty dispute when local leaders were under siege. Their responsiveness in this respect was reinforced by the organization of the GPD in the provinces after 1959–60. (Main Force units, as far as can be determined, do not have civilian party secretaries as their senior political commissars.)

It is clear that during the Cultural Revolution, the PLA, as a political actor, was far from monolithic and that the military system devised by the Chinese contributed to the PLA's failure to respond without question to the demands of the political center. In times of severe intraparty dispute, party control of the gun was not assured, and the system presumably devised to assure such control had specific built-in weaknesses that were merely compounded by the introduction of senior military officials into the Politburo, where they could be drawn into the factional disputes that divided the party.

TO WHAT extent, then, did the Chinese military *system* contribute to the organization of the military coup d'etat? For Nelsen, the alleged coup plot contrived by Lin Biao and the Chinese high command grew basically out of "civil/military competition for political power" (p. 89). On the level of issues, Lin opposed détente with the US and supported the "self-sufficiency" approach to China's economic development (pp. 90–91). Maitan, who appears to disregard the allegations of a coup plot (but not Lin's death), prefers to stay within the context of domestic and foreign policy disputes and does not raise the question of a civil-military dispute over who shall govern. Indeed, he argues that Lin had become dispensable to Mao because Lin's support within the army had been undermined by the regional military commanders and that Lin, along with Chen Boda, "impeded the conclusion of a deal with the central administration and the strong regional forces which asserted themselves in 1968–70" (p. 300). He further argues that the removal of Lin's supporters in the provinces after 1971 permitted the restoration of party and state administrators "without alarming the local military commanders" (p. 301). Maitan does not ignore the gains made by the military establishment in representation both at the center and in the provinces; however, he views these gains as having been made by one bureaucracy at the expense of another. Thus, for Maitan, the issue is not one of civil-military relations but one of interbureaucratic conflict.

To Nelsen's and Maitan's analyses, which complement rather than contradict each other, must be added analysis of the total military system devised by the Chinese. Based upon values inherited from 22 years of "people's war," the system emphasized political participation. At the political center, the high command was essentially interlocked with the policymaking process through membership in the Politburo. At the regional level, the relationship between the regional commands and the provincial party apparatus was *interactive* rather than interlocking, but as Cultural Revolution events and the Lin Biao affair were

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to demonstrate, the pattern of interaction was significant.

The participatory proclivities of the Chinese military system were not controlled by the General Political Department. Rather than assuring that the civilian party apparatus would dominate the military, the GPD tended to place control of the PLA system of political work in the hands of the military establishment. It neither imparted unity to the PLA as a political actor nor assured unity between the high command and the regional commands. As a control apparatus, it failed to assure the PLA's unquestioning loyalty to the civilian party hierarchy, failed to assure the regional commands' unqualified response to directives from the central leadership, and failed to prevent an alleged coup plot originating in the high command. Clearly, the GPD was a weak tool to rely upon if the civilian party leadership intended to use it to assure that the gun remained under the control of the civilian party hierarchy. Its spotty history may partially explain why, after it was revived in 1969 after a two-year period of temporary suspension, it came under the direction of senior officials from the civilian party hierarchy.

More important, though, the military system devised by Mao tended to undermine party control of the gun. The Lin Biao affair, if the purge of the military hierarchy that followed it is any measure, is the clearest demonstration of this particular weakness in the Chinese military system. First, Lin Biao was at once China's senior military official, acting Chairman of the Central Military Commission, Minister of National Defense, and Mao's successor (having been so designated at the Ninth Party Congress in 1969). His multiple positions, held simultaneously, epitomized the absence of a clear line between the military hierarchy and the civilian party hierarchy. The issue of the party's controlling the gun had become moot, for the basic problem had become one of Mao's ability to control Lin. Because Lin's personal, political, and institutional position had been personally supported by Mao, party control of the military hierarchy in fact amounted to Mao's influence alone. Second, since no formal institution or process within the Chinese military system could restrain Lin, Mao had to resort to packing the CMC, purging the central leadership, rotating Main Forces units, and forming an anti-Lin coalition composed of civilian party leaders and regional military commanders. The Chinese military system had failed to accommodate itself to Mao's dictum, and to recover his position, Mao, with his supporters, had to resort to coalition politics.

THE CHINESE military system today remains much as it was under Lin Biao's direction. To be sure, a senior member of the civilian party apparatus (Wei Guoqing) remains director of the General Political Department. That a civilian holds this post may reduce the control problem that Mao tried to correct after the Lin Biao affair. But no structural changes have been made, and the system itself continues to be peculiarly susceptible to the reinvolvement of the PLA in intraparty factional disputes. It is evident that in spite of Mao's dictum, the boundary between the civil and military hierarchies is still quite porous. The interlocking structure of the high command and the Politburo remains, and the interaction between the Regional Forces and the provincial-level party hierarchies continues, even more so because of the 1979 pronouncements that local party first secretaries will be the first political commissars of the military departments at the same level.

The Chinese military system was a major factor in the crisis of 1970–71, and the continued acceptance of this system by the new Chinese leadership, even with a civilian party official functioning as director of the General Political Department, does not permit the symbolic brandishing of Mao's 1938 dictum to overcome the system's implications for the dynamics of Chinese politics. The system forces the military hierarchy to become involved in policy formulation outside the narrow, functional concerns of the military establishment, and the high command will probably remain a potential faction within intraparty policy disputes. "Praetorianism" is clearly too strong a word to describe China's problem with its military,[9] but the character of the Chinese military system would permit a "praetorian" syndrome to emerge if the civil leadership were to become dependent upon the military hierarchy for its continued existence.

[3] See especially Lynn T. White III, "The Liberation Army and the Chinese People," *Armed Forces and Society*, Spring 1975, pp. 380–82.

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Nasser's Record

By Amos Perlmutter

RAYMOND W. BAKER. *Egypt's Uncertain Revolution Under Nasser and Sadat*. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1978.

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MOHAMED HEIKAL. *The Sphinx and the Commissar: The Rise and Fall of Soviet Influence in the Middle East*. New York, NY, Harper and Row, 1978.

P.J. VATIKIOTIS. *Nasser and His Generation*. London, Croom Helm, 1978.

MUNIR NASSER. *Press, Politics and Power: Egypt, Heikal and Al-Ahram*. Ames, IA, The Iowa State University Press, 1979.

A.I. DAWISHA. *Egypt in the Arab World: The Elements of Foreign Policy*. New York, NY, John Wiley and Sons, 1976.

KAREN DAWISHA. *Soviet Foreign Policy Towards Egypt*. New York, NY, St. Martin's Press, 1979.

GAMAL ABDEL NASSER made Egypt famous. He ousted the British from Suez. By playing East against West, he secured arms from the Soviet Union and created a challenge to Anglo-American defenses in the northern tier of the Middle East. He established the United Arab Republic (UAR), embracing Egypt, Syria, and Yemen, and proudly proclaimed Egyptian (diplomatically referred to as pan-Arab) hegemony over the Arabs. He launched several agrarian reforms, and by enhancing Egypt's reputation in the Third World, he also nurtured Egypt's incipient industrialization. He did much to rebuild the country's pride in its identity. As a result, he ranks with Josip Broz Tito, Jawaharlal Nehru, Zhou Enlai, and possibly Sukarno as one of the most exalted leaders of the Third World.

All this seems to suggest that Nasser's record was an impressive one indeed. But was it? Almost a decade after his death, most of the books reviewed here do not judge it favorably.

In actuality, Nasser's internal accomplishments were meager, and his diplomacy never freed Egypt from great power machinations. On the domestic side, his two major agrarian reforms—in 1953 and 1961—ended in dismal failure. At his death in 1970, Egyptian peasants who had not owned land in Farouq's time still did not own even one feddan (1.038 acres). The real beneficiaries of the agrarian reforms were the prosperous peasantry of lower Egypt. Similarly, the lower classes did not profit from industrial development. The state bureaucrats and capitalists who are now Anwar al-Sadat's new bankers and pashas were its beneficiaries. There were many other problems. The rate of growth in the numbers of urban workers did not keep pace with needs. Nor was the malady of overpopulation tackled effectively. Urbanization proceeded at an uncontrolled pace. Cairo, for example, increased in size to 12 million people, even though its facilities could handle less than a third that number. Even today, the country has practically no working telephones, and roads and communications remain poor. In fact, contact between lower and upper Egypt is mainly by airplane and riverboat. Finally, as Raymond Baker points out in his study of what he terms Egypt's "uncertain revolution," Nasser hooked his economy to Soviet bureaucratic socialism and recreated a bureaucratic feudalism. The bureaucracy grew geometrically while economic development grew arithmetically. In this context, the Aswan dam constituted only a sterile symbol, a pyrrhic economic victory.

In foreign affairs, Nasser's so-called Bismarckian policy, in combination with Pan-Arabism, brought Egypt to the brink of disaster militarily as well as economically. Although Nasser did force the British out of Suez in 1954, Israel dominated the Suez Canal—Egypt's national symbol and pride—by the time he died. Even Tawfiq al-Hakim, the dean of Egyp-

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tian letters and an early admirer of Nasser (in fact, he was Nasser's most beloved author), admitted in the mid-1970's, as John Waterbury notes in *Egypt: Burdens of the Past/Options for the Future,* "that for twenty years I was duped," and Tawfiq al-Hakim suggested (as have other writers) that a statue of Nasser should be erected, not in Cairo but in Tel Aviv. He also charged Nasser with distorting the goals of the Egyptian revolution and maintained that attacks on Nasser by both the right and left for his vanity, corruption, brutality, and selfishness were justified.

Nasser's military record was, in truth, abysmal. In the end, as his chief propagandist Mohamed Heikal (Muhammed Hasanyn Haykal) writes in *The Sphinx and the Commissar,* he was completely beholden to the Soviets, who, as Heikal observes, did not reward his loyalty. Not only did he suffer decisive and humiliating defeat at the hands of the Israelis in 1967, but he also lost Egypt's "Vietnam war," the action in Yemen (1962–65).

Moreover, Nasser's dream of Egyptian hegemony in a united Arab world was thwarted. In 1961, Syria ousted Egypt's proconsul, Marshal Abd al-Hakim Amer, and left the UAR. Then in 1963 Yemen and Iraq refused to merge with Egypt.

WHY DID all this happen to Egypt's modern liberator? P.J. Vatikiotis, in *Nasser and His Generation,* provides us with the definitive answer. Instead of concentrating on creating a free and modern Egypt in political terms, Nasser opted to develop the country's security and military-bureaucratic structures. Vatikiotis writes:

The man . . . who, in less than a generation, became the oracle of Egypt's destiny and of Arab revolution at mid-century, was a soldier by chance, a politician by instinct and a conspirator by ability and inclination. He contributed little to soldiering or politics. But he elevated the more native art of conspiracy to new technical heights. At the end of the day, however, he was by formation, tradition, and force of circumstances an Egyptian despot. (pp. 363–64)

As Vatikiotis correctly points out, a police state based on bureaucratic feudalism posed great impediments to economic progress.

Vatikiotis, in by far the most important book yet written on Nasser, his intellectual and political origins, his generation, and the making of Ottoman-style praetorianism, contends that Nasser was influenced mainly by the radical and fascist nationalism of Ahmad Hussein's Young Egypt *(Misr al-Fatat)*, by the military academy, by the nationalist radical wing of the Wafd party, and to some extent by the Moslem Brotherhood. However, since Nasser never read anything more profound than Egyptian newspapers, his political "philosophy" was derived from the brilliant and articulate writings of a group of Egyptian journalists and nationalists that included Ihsan abul Quddus, Fathi Radwan, and the Amin brothers. Above all, he listened to Mohamed Heikal, a young journalist who wrote for *Akhbar al-Yom* (the newspaper of the Amin brothers). Heikal was a propagandist and a practiced courtier and image manipulator. Although in viewpoint he moved from nationalist leftism to Third World, pan-Arab nationalism between 1950 and 1970, he continued to serve Nasser in vital ways during this evolution. Because Nasser was inarticulate, he depended on Heikal to write and read for him. Far more than Nasser's speech writer, Heikal was Nasser's confidant, his mouthpiece, his chief propagandist and negotiator. Heikal helped create the exaggerated expectations Egyptians had of Nasser. He "explained" Nasser to Americans and Europeans, to Third World potentates and revolutionaries. The only foreigners he was ambivalent about were the Soviets.

For years, Heikal printed venomous attacks on the Americans and British in *al-Ahram,* the newspaper of which he became editor-in-chief in 1957 and which he built (with the help of Nasser) into the most widely distributed one in Egypt. Munir Nasser's study of the Egyptian press tells us that Heikal had originally opposed a regime-run newspaper, suggesting instead formation of a regime-supported political party. However, Heikal was acutely aware of the weaknesses of privately owned newspapers like *Akhbar al-Yom,* and after the Suez War, as Nasser consolidated power, Heikal took over *al-Ahram* and turned it into Nasser's international propaganda vehicle.

But *al-Ahram* was more than that. Under Heikal, it served as a foreign office, a strategic center, an intelligence unit. The paper was a tool of Nasser's police state, something that Munir Nasser, who depends exclusively on Heikal interviews, fails to grasp. In the final analysis, Munir Nasser is most concerned with the fact that "*al-Ahram's* credibility and prestige suffered after Heikal" (Heikal was replaced in 1974). He does not admit that Heikal and *al-Ahram* were instruments of Nasser and Nasserism. Sadat did not oust Heikal and appoint one of his own scribes, Yousef al-Sibai (killed by the PLO in Cyprus in 1978), to head *al-Ahram* because Heikal was a champion of freedom of the press but because he was a Nasser intimate. Mustafa Amin, Heikal's former boss at *Ahkbar al-Yom,* wrote

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a kind of epitaph for Heikal (quoted by Munir Nasser, p. 109): "Heikal built a pyramid and buried the press in it."

And what is the final judgment on Nasser's pan-Arabism? Unfortunately, A.I. Dawisha's book tells us nothing new, primarily because he has fallen victim to the sterile, pseudo-scientific cybernetic model of foreign policy. The model stifles his analysis. Although his research must have been monumental—in fact, the research design takes up half of the book—the information crowds in upon the reader. Brilliance and clarity are needed to tell the story, but Dawisha provides us with a catalog of information resembling an almanac, and not much more.

It is Vatikiotis who finally penetrates the myths of Nasser's foreign policy and his famous concentric circles (of which Amin, Heikal, and Quddus were the authors). Vatikiotis shows that the concept of Egyptianhood, combined with pan-Arabism, had had great currency among liberal Egyptian nationalists of the 1930's. He also clearly demonstrates the vicissitudes of Nasser's pan-Arabism, which Nasser used for his own purposes. According to Vatikiotis:

It is futile to establish whether or not Nasser believed in a political doctrine of Arab nationalism. . . . He believed that an Arab region free of foreign power influence would allow Egypt a leading role in its affairs and destiny—and at the expense of other Arab contenders. Where he differed from previous Egyptian rulers was that he was less circumscribed than they were in involving his country in Arab affairs. (p. 225)

In the process of laying out his conclusions, Vatikiotis refutes the notion, trumpeted by Heikal and other Nasserite journalists, that Nasser attempted to fuse Arab and Egyptian destinies. As Vatikiotis sums up the matter, "A combination of circumstances and coincidence of events pushed Nasser towards Arabism and the adoption of Arab nationalism and unity both as a means and an end simultaneously" (p. 233). Nasser denounced French and British aggression in 1956 not only to cover his military defeat by Israel but also to cement his emergence as a Third World anticolonial leader. He should have erected a monument in Cairo to Sir Anthony Eden.

At the time, it is worth noting, only the Israelis believed in Nasser's deep commitment to the Arabs. Their misperception on this score was subsequently reinforced by regular Sunday reading of Heikal's "Speaking Frankly" column in *al-Ahram,* which came out on Friday. The Israeli cabinet saw this column as a true mirror of Nasser's policy, apparently believing he might carry it out on Monday.

Ironically, the failure to dispel Israeli misconceptions of his pan-Arab, "Egyptianhood" purposes prevented Nasser from achieving these ends. In the reviewer's opinion, Nasser could well have succeeded in accomplishing his goals if he had managed to either win a war with Israel or avoid a military engagement altogether. By choosing a course that led to both war and bitter defeat, however, he ensured that he would be thwarted in his efforts to bring about his larger objectives. Whoever finally provoked the war in 1967, that conflict marked the end of any chance for peace for more than a decade. It resulted in the death of 30,000-40,000 Egyptians in Sinai, the loss of Egyptian territory, damage to the country's honor, and the disappearance of all hope of reform because of increasing dependence on the Soviets. Only gradually, after Nasser's demise, could Sadat—whom Nasser contemptuously called "Colonel OK," according to Vatikiotis—alter the situation.

Why did Nasser make such a grievous mistake? According to Vatikiotis, Nasser in the beginning was ambivalent toward Israel, but by 1955 Israel had become his bête noire. "Nasser's attitude to Israel," Vatikiotis goes on (p. 249), "evolved with his Arab policy, or his struggle for Arab leadership, and his adoption of an anti-Western policy at home and in the Middle East region as a whole." Moreover, Vatikiotis contends, Nasser's 1967 brinkmanship brought upon him unexpected disaster because he was manipulated by events. He thought "in confronting Israel [that] the U.S. may restrain the latter"; furthermore, he felt that his army, having been trained and equipped since 1955 by the Russians, was now ready, and that the USSR could be depended upon to support him and so offset or counter American backing of Israel (p. 256).

THE USSR, of course, did not rescue Nasser. Just as it had done in 1956 and as it was to do again in 1970, it left that job up to the United States. Why, then, did Nasser maintain his pro-Soviet stance after 1967? I was hoping that Karen Dawisha, A.I. Dawisha's wife, would supply the answer in *Soviet Foreign Policy Towards Egypt.* But her book is identical to her husband's, a mechanical compendium of data and statistics (mostly borrowed—with, of course, appropriate credit—from other works). Her "research design" does little to advance my understanding of Soviet and Egyptian motivations.

But the question still remains: why did the anti-Marxist graduate

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of a British military school and of Hussein's national socialism join forces with the heirs of Iosif Stalin? Could it be that Nasser's anti-Westernism moved him to ally with the Soviets? Is that a sufficient answer? I doubt it, although most of the reviewed authors, especially Karen Dawisha, believe that it is.

Only Heikal could tell us for sure. As he rightly claims in *The Sphinx and the Commissar,* no other Egyptian individual except Nasser had a better position from which to view the erratic relations between Egypt and the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, Heikal reveals little of substance, confining himself mostly to self-praise and journalistic tidbits. He does, however, deny contentions, such as those of Karen Dawisha, that the Soviets achieved certain objectives. In particular, he rejects claims that after Suez in 1956 the Soviets aligned Egypt's foreign policy "in such a way that it would completely coincide with Soviet interest" and that the Soviets influenced the radical transformation of the Egyptian economy. He notes that by 1971 Egypt had repudiated most of these Soviet "successes."

Perhaps Heikal's most useful contribution is his description of the asymmetry, the strangeness, the lack of camaraderie in the relationship between the Soviet patrons and their Egyptian clients. Though Egypt was the key Arab ally of the Soviets, it was never "theirs" even at the height of Nasser's power. As Heikal says, "The Soviet Union frequently showed a surprising inability to understand the realities of power in other parts of the world." Heikal himself told Nikita Khrushchev that Egyptians were "Westerners," that they did not like Soviet movies and preferred a trip to Paris to a trip to Bulgaria. Here is the essence of the bitterness between Egypt and the Soviets. Egyptians consider themselves members of a superior, non-Asiatic civilization—which means Soviets are their inferiors. Why should they watch Soviet movies even if they needed Soviet weapons? In 1978, after Sadat had clearly demonstrated an inclination to replace Soviet equipment with American arms, one of Egypt's senior generals told me something while I was in Cairo that reinforces the point. If department stores sold weapons and the American equipment were sold on the second floor, he said, he would not even look at Soviet wares on the first floor.

So Soviet-Egyptian amity was a Nasserite dream. When it turned into a nightmare for Sadat in 1971, he drove the Soviets and their movies out of Egypt. If Soviet strategy was to anchor in Egypt, Heikal concludes, then "I don't believe that the Russians ever evolved an overall strategy for the Arab world." Certainly, Egypt failed to serve the USSR as a bridgehead to the radical Arab world.

In a book of essays by a group of Israeli scholars, Yaacov Ro'i ends his balanced analysis thus:

Relations between Moscow and Cairo included all the major spheres which comprise ties between partners in the international arena, particularly between superpowers and medium-sized, technologically backward 'client' states. From the Soviet point of view these relations were satisfactorily defined by the May 1971 Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation which contained both general declarations and specific references to political, military, economic and other aspects of the relationship. While Cairo did not officially reject this framework until March 1976, it was clearly calling for a Soviet reevaluation some time before. Moscow's failure–or refusal–to reappraise either the conceptual or practical guidelines of its Egyptian policy brought to the fore the fundamental nature of the disagreement between the two states after October 1973.[1]

Heikal never makes us aware of this disparity in his book. He writes as if Nasser's Egypt were the senior partner, and he is oblivious to the ironies of his description of the Soviets:

You must realize that for all their pragmatism, the Soviet leadership is made up of Slav peasants, easily moved to laughter and tears. They are fascinated by the attributes of power.

What a marvelous description of Nasser's reign in Egypt! And who are Nasser and Heikal, and even Sadat, if not sons of the Nile, sons of Egyptian peasants like Rais himself, given easily to tears and laughter?

Because the Soviets treated Egypt as a client, the Egyptians ousted them unceremoniously. In the end, the net result of the Soviet efforts was merely a more inefficient Egyptian bureaucracy. By the 1980's, Egypt was de-Sovietized, de-Nasserized, and deradicalized. Anwar Sadat and his military-bureaucratic establishment chose to do away with everything Nasser stood for. They even made peace with Israel. The mirage of Nasserism, radicalism, and Soviet "influence" has faded away, but Egypt, the Nile, and the new Pharaoh remain.

[1] Yaacov Ro'i, Ed., *The Limits to Power: Soviet Policy in the Middle East,* London, Croom Helm, 1979, p. 181.

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Annual indices for Volumes IV-to-date appear in the November-December issue (No. 6) for each year. A combined index to the first three volumes is contained in Vol. III, No. 6 (November-December 1954).

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